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ABSTRACT

The dialogue journal procedure, which involves written turn-taking between a teacher and a student, is examined in terms of how the journal process can prepare students for later oral communication. The use of the dialogue journal with four distinct student populations (hearing impaired or deaf, learning disabled, bilingual, and English-as-a-Second Language) is described. Six types of dialogue journals (audiotape, cassette, oral, response, use on content areas, and computer) are discussed, including teacher procedures, sample dialogue questions, and potential problems. It is concluded that: (1) the dialogue journal does help stimulate conversation and at a deeper level than generally produced in a classroom; and (2) this tool reflects authentic verbal communication and contains many of the same processes that are utilized in real-world situations. The following information is appended: a discussion of seven conversational features used within dialogue journals; directions for responding to independent reading; a list of uses of the response journal; pointers on responding to who you are; a list of benefits of the dialogue journal in a content area (mathematics); teacher's responses within the dialogue journal; series of dialogue questions; a schematic showing the complete dialogue journal cycle; the questionnaire; a transcript of actual tape-recorded student conversations; tape-recorded conversation evaluation form; a summary of potential problems associated with teaching with the dialogue journal; and examples of the dialogue journal response form. Contains 31 references. (LB)

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WRITING BEFORE SPEAKING:
HOW THE DIALOGUE JOURNAL STIMULATES CONVERSATION

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the School of Intercultural Studies

Department of TESOL and Applied Linguistics

Biola University

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ABSTRACT

WRITING BEFORE SPEAKING:
HOW THE DIALOGUE JOURNAL STIMULATES CONVERSATION

Michelle Marie McGrath

Writing before speaking is one method which enables students to think in the language they are currently learning. Composing answers to challenging questions beyond their perceived abilities assists students conversationally. Historically, the journal has been employed by individuals to explore feelings, concerns, and thoughts. More recently, dialogue journal use involves written turn-taking between the teacher and students. Furthermore, the dialogue journal has had a intellectual and political environment which has nourished its growth as a liberating and empowering instrument.

Since 1979, the dialogue journal procedure has been utilized with six different student populations. Its use in four of those groups is discussed to show its versatility and applicability. Six types of dialogue journals are discussed, including teacher procedures, sample dialogue questions, and potential problems associated with this classroom tool. Finally, my own research, a questionnaire, and tape-recorded conversations from my Adult Education Level IV class, demonstrates how the dialogue journal can prepare students for later oral communication.

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To Michael Patrick

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE DIALOGUE JOURNAL

Statement of the Problem

It has been the author's experience that an ESL conversation class, or the conversational component of an integrated skills class, can be one of the most frustrating classes to teach. Most commonly, it is left to the whim of the teacher as to how to structure or organize the course. Often the structure of the language and reading are given the most emphasis with the result that conversation is not always given the priority needed to facilitate noticeable improvement in students. On the one hand, the teacher is expected to improve the student's spoken proficiency, and she[1] may have creative ideas and produce a steady stream of handouts, but from an organizational perspective, the conversation class is often bewildering to the teacher and thus perhaps disappointing to students.

In addition, even if the instructor has a consistently organized program with a clearly delineated curriculum, it is at times a mystery as to how to motivate the ESL student to speak. The issue is not one of cultural or social barriers—even the most culturally sensitive teacher at times may have difficulty inspiring students to engage in conversation. Rather, the dilemma lies in trying to discover how to consistently involve students in speaking the target language, English—not simply to have a riveting discussion now and then. Therefore, the goal is to establish a systematic approach in which students are not only encouraged to participate in conversation but desire to do so.

---

[1] In the chapters I have alternated the he/she pronoun for both teacher and student. For example, within Chapter 1 "teacher" is referred to as "she" and "student" as "he." Then in Chapter 2 the opposite is true, and then Chapter 3 follows the same usage as Chapter 1. I have also used "students" whenever possible to avoid further sexism.

Also, the teacher can experience receiving one-word answers from students. She may try to elicit a more in-depth explanation but may be only partially successful. Then, the conversational component of the class can quickly degenerate into "teacher talk," which is certainly not the intended goal of the concerned teacher. The more the instructor speaks, with the objective of initiating the conversation, the more students will be reticent to speak. At this point, the teacher tends to become frustrated because her various attempts to stimulate students to speak have been unsuccessful.

The "blank-face" syndrome also exists, which can be almost debilitating to the instructor. This is described as follows: the teacher asks her class a question, intended either for class discussion or for one-on-one conversation, and students simply stare at the instructor with no response. Faced with silence, the teacher resorts to speaking and students withdraw even more as the teacher tries to evoke a response.

An Explanation for the Problem

A partial reason for this lack of meaningful conversation is that learners are often not allowed to interact with the language before they speak. They are not forced to contemplate the topic first. Once students begin to think about what they have to say, they can articulate their ideas more clearly (assuming they have acquired the language needed). One method of accomplishing this is through writing. However, in order to stimulate thought there must be freedom in the writing process. Students must be allowed time to know what they think, or at least some portion of what they think.

This free writing takes place in the dialogue journal, giving students the opportunity to explore their thoughts in the target language. By dialoguing back and forth with their teacher they can begin to see more clearly what it is they believe about a certain topic. Throughout the dialoguing process, questions, comments, and criticisms are given; these all help to formulate students' opinions and ideas. After this formulation of ideas, students

are ready for oral dialogue, either one-on-one with their teacher, in pairs or small groups, or speaking out by themselves in class. Students have a personal interest in what they are talking about, and the teacher merely acts as a facilitator occasionally to keep the conversation flowing.

Dialogue Journals Can Provide a Solution

Dialogue journals provide the key to stimulating conversation on a deeper level. Although these journals have been used in the writing class for some time, their use can be easily extended into the conversation class. The dialogue journal is the perfect vehicle to bring the two skills of writing and speaking together. It gives students an opportunity to think about their world and how they want to express those thoughts in language. The teacher may have already used conversation to help improve students' writing, but the converse is also true: writing in the dialogue journal before speaking can truly improve conversation. In essence, then, the written dialogue between teacher and students is reflected in more productive classroom conversation.

Since the dialogue journal accurately reflects oral interaction, it can be utilized to motivate and stimulate students to speak. Conversation in class will not appear foreign since students have been practicing individually with their teacher many times before they are asked to speak individually or present ideas in front of the whole class. The dialogue journal acts as a primer or a prompt to activate students for conversation.

However, the dialogue journal does more than just inspire students to produce an utterance. Many good conversational activities do this, and they will continue to do so. The dialogue journal not only motivates students to speak but assists them in speaking in a more meaningful manner. Instead of merely giving short comments or monosyllabic answers, student are primed to offer a longer and more contemplative response. It is true that it is difficult to measure exactly how much students process or critically review an

answer in their mind, but there is a definite difference when the dialogue journal is utilized. Shy students are often surprised that they have become involved in a conversation. They may need to be reminded that they actually spoke in class or contributed more than one sentence. At times it takes them several weeks or even months to realize that they are becoming less and less inhibited.

The dialogue journal combined with later conversational practice provides an excellent incentive for students to interact with their teacher and with other students. The dialogue journal is an excellent writing tool in and of itself, inherently allowing students to discover what they think. The instructor assists with this process, helping students to "think out loud." This flows smoothly into an oral dialogue which is meaningful to both the teacher and students. The dialogue journal is thus a catalyst for conversation.

Definition of the Dialogue Journal

The dialogue journal allows students the freedom to write without restraint. In this sense, it is liberating for students. Because of this freedom, students have the opportunity to view and examine what they write and therefore what they think. Consequently, the dialogue journal experience becomes empowering as students realize that what they write does make a difference, at least to their teacher. Their words have power. In essence, the dialogue journal process develops a sense of liberation and empowerment for students, stimulates examination of what students think and believe which provides a model for verbal interaction later, and finally, invites students, within a committed and safe context, to disagree with their current topic or even with their teacher's views.

First, the dialogue journal can be defined as a significant tool which liberates and empowers students. Staton contends:

> the power and interest in these dialogues comes from the fact that the students and teacher are taking action when they write, and by their speech "acts" their relationship and often the classroom situation changes from day to day. The functional character of the dialogue . . . empowers students to accomplish their

> goals and intentions by using written language to get things done—in effect, to change their own situation by language. (1988, p. 28)

In addition, in a review of Dialogue Journal Communication: Classroom, Linguistic, Social, and Cognitive Views by Staton, Shuy, Peyton, and Reed, Shuman (1988, pp. 621-622) states that "by permitting students to select their own topics for writing and by providing an actual ongoing communicative exchange, students become masters of their own tasks. Literacy must be used to liberate and empower, not to control and degrade either teacher or student" (p. x).

This liberation and empowerment which results from positive communication through dialogue journalling is true for the teacher as well. It is a dynamic communicative exchange. Bode asserts:

> Dialogue journal writing is liberating in the sense that it allows for the possibility of mutual conversation. Shor and Freire (1987, 30) note that this is the essence of teachers becoming liberating educators; i. e., teachers learn with and from their students. Both are empowered. This is in direct contrast to what Freire refers to as a "banking" method of education in which the teacher deposits knowledge into the heads of students. 'Instead of transferring knowledge statically as a fixed possession of the teacher, dialogue allows for the dynamic exchange of information' (p. 100). It is through dialogue journal writing that education can be personalized. From a teacher's perspective, that is very empowering. The essence of teaching is to meet each child at his/her point of need. (Bode, 1989, p. 570)

In a dialogue journal experiment which examined entries written during student teaching, Fishman and Raver (1989) agree with Bode, stating that teaching is not a one-sided process but instead involves both the teacher and the student; instruction is dialogue. They point out that "dialogue journals were powerful learning tools. They enlarged vision, deepened understanding, raised consciousness, and enabled empowerment, which made the investment of time, energy, and self they demanded undeniably worthwhile" (p. 109).

The dialogue journal allows the individual to write and think with few restraints. Within the dialogue journal context students are able to interact with their teacher in a confidential manner similar to one-on-one or face-to-face communication. Ideally, this interaction is not fraught with judgment or criticism on the part of the teacher. Instead, the

dialogue journal medium is to be a neutral meeting ground and a "safe place" in which to converse. If the dialogue journal exchange is extended over a period of time, then it can and usually does become more representative of the student's thoughts and ideas. If not monitored closely, though, it may become psychoanalytical. For example, the teacher may begin giving advice to students or try to analyze a problem a student has. The teacher must remember that the objective of the journal is to allow students freedom in their writing and at the same time to process their writing, not to perform writing as a process. This means that the dialogue journal should motivate and stimulate students to think—hopefully, to depths they have never thought before.

Second, an element of the dialogue journal definition is that journalling students are inspired to critically review their thoughts about the topic. They are being invited by the teacher to explore what they are writing more completely and thoroughly. Staton (1984) points out that a learner has to continually work from a perspective that is different from his own—his instructor's. She quotes Gillian McNamee (1979), a classroom researcher, who describes how the adult "continually makes demands out of the child that are just beyond the child's grasp, and the child struggles to find coherence in what the adult is saying" (p. 173). Staton's (1984) concept of "international scaffolding" (p. 158), then, is reflective of what the dialogue journal accomplishes, engaging students in the teacher's thinking. This concept is visually depicted as an interchange between the teacher and a student. Layer upon layer of understanding is built with a student's interest(s) directing the interaction. "It allows . . . [a] student to build on and use the teacher's actual thinking process . . . to reach a goal or solve a problem which . . . [a] student could not [do] unaided" (Staton, 1984, p. 156-157). The pattern of questioning that the teacher uses becomes a model of how students can approach material in the classroom (p. 158). Figure 1 follows:

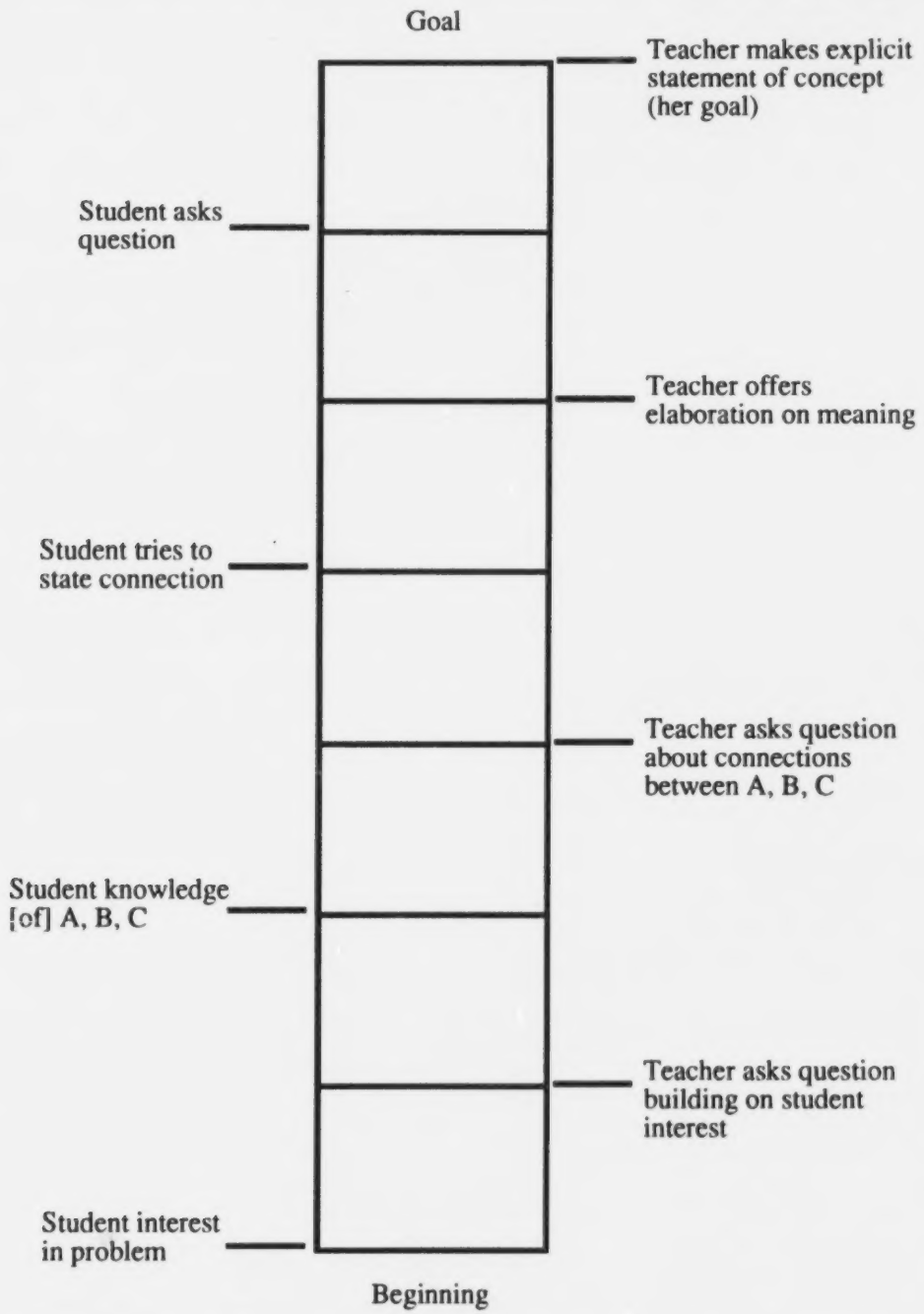
Goal
Teacher makes explicit statement of concept (her goal)
Student asks question
Teacher offers elaboration on meaning
Student tries to state connection
Teacher asks question about connections between A, B, C
Student knowledge [of] A, B, C
Teacher asks question building on student interest
Student interest in problem
Beginning

Figure 1. Diagram of international scaffolding (Source: Modified from Staton, 1984, p. 158).

Third, the dialogue journal can be defined as a tool which challenges students to analyze and criticize their current topic and even to disagree with what is presented to them by their teacher. A student is involved in "a written conversation between two persons on a functional continued basis about topics of individual (and even mutual) interest" (Staton, 1988, p. 312). Staton notes that "a dialogue journal involves an implicit commitment of self, an engagement with the other" (1988, p. 47).

Judith Newman, who has made a study of dialogue journals, used them in a graduate education course she taught. This was her first experience using dialogue journals. Even though she has had limited experience with their use, she offers some important insights. Newman herself, along with her students, explored within the dialogue journal the process of writing and even of writing literature. She states that individuals can more accurately view their beliefs within the dialogue journal context. Also, through this observation there is an opportunity to examine those same beliefs and to even express those ideas which are not firmly grounded (Newman, 1988, p. 155). Newman adds, "Equally valuable are those statements, our own and those of others we read, which catch us off guard—comments, assertions, arguments which offer us a fresh way of seeing things, that make us aware we haven't seen things in quite that way before" (Newman, 1988, p. 155).

The dialogue journal thus liberates and empowers a student as well as the teacher, involving both in meaningful interaction. This entails more critical analysis and thought than is otherwise generally required in the classroom. Furthermore, it is a tool which challenges and motivates students to explore or press beyond what they perceive as their limits. Finally, the dialogue journal is a neutral medium in which the teacher and students can interact on paper, providing the foundation for significant oral communication later.

The Rationale behind the Dialogue Journal

Next to the dialogue journal, writing notes from one student to another during classtime is the process which most closely approximates conversation (Shuy, 1988, pp. 80-81 cited in Staton, Shuy, Peyton, and Reed 1988). However, writing notes cannot cover the wide range of language functions that are included in the dialogue journal. Although a note passed from one student to another contains immediate feedback, as does the dialogue journal, the response in the latter is much more meaningful in that it contains affirmations, questions, and comments specifically intended to motivate students to participate in a dialogue with their teacher. Ideally, students begin to ask the teacher questions as they become more and more involved with the topic.

Thus, it becomes more facilitative for students to dialogue orally with their teacher, with their fellow students, and, finally, with their class as a whole. Conversation becomes less of a threat and their affective filter is lowered. Students have had a chance to "try out" their thoughts on paper, anticipating some kind of audience—which occurs in any writing process. Consequently, they are likely to be able to speak more readily (less fearfully) and more confidently about their ideas and concerns.

Towards a Definition of Written Dialogue

It is very difficult to evaluate written dialogue as a single entity. The very word "dialogue" indicates that this aspect of writing cannot be examined apart from the oral nature of language; dialogue implies conversation and the components found in interactive discourse. Written dialogue thus implies the use of oral characteristics in a graphic mode. "Those working in written discourse have tended to analyze it as a monologue and to ignore the fact that as he reads it the reader interacts with the text and thus an interactive model might also be appropriate to a written discourse" (Coulthard, 1977, p. 80 cited in Holec, 1980, p. 188).

When composing, the writer should be constantly thinking of the reader. The writer participates in an internal dialogue, trying to anticipate what the reader needs to know in order to fully understand the writing. It is also necessary for the writer to think of what understanding(s) the reader brings to the writing. Sinclair (1980) points out that the reader affects exactly what the author will write, how he will sequence it, and how he will present it. Indeed, in a preface, a writer is able to speak directly to the reader. Sinclair makes the relationship clearer between the writer and his target reader through the use of the following diagram (Figure 2):

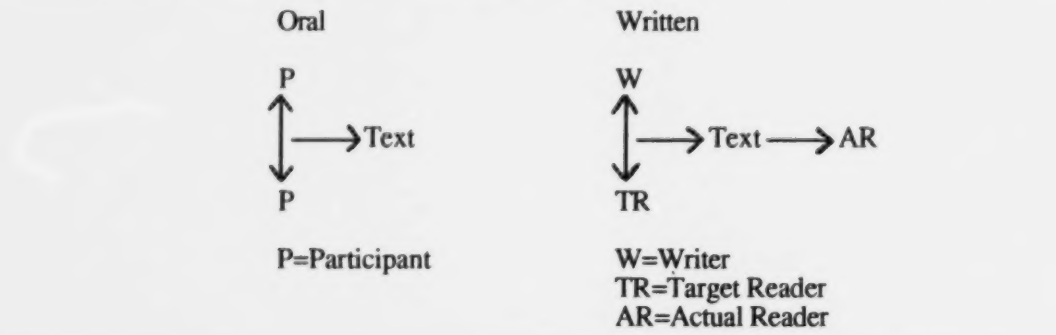

Figure 2. An interaction pattern of writing and speaking (Source: Modified from Sinclair, 1980, p. 233).

In addition, written dialogue consists of turn-taking. This is most accurately seen in letter writing. Although they are lengthened and do not allow for interruption, written turns can still be compared to oral interaction. Widdowson contends that "written correspondence . . . might be considered as the larger-scale version of talking in the written mode. . . . This (correspondence) can be reasonably regarded as a written analogue of talking . . . " (1978, pp. 61, 65). Holec (1980) demonstrates through one example that writing can act as conversation, as in Figure 3:

Text (1)

11th January 1979

M.H. Holec
CRAPEL
Universite de Nancy II
23 Boulevard Albert 1er
5400 Nancy

Dear Henri,

I am writing to invite you to participate in an Applied Linguistics Colloquium to be held at the University of Berne from the evening of Wednesday 30th May to midday on Saturday 2nd June 1979 . . .the invited participants will present a paper at the Colloquium and agree to its being published in the proceedings . . .

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours,

H.G. Widdowson

Text (2)

Nancy, le 25th January 1979

la Directeur,

Professor H.G. WIDDOWSON
University of London
Institute of Education
Bedford Way
London, WC1H0AL

Dear Henri,

Aren't I honored and pleased at your invitation! Thank you mille fois, mon vieux.

I don't know much about language teaching and still less about discourse analysis, but this won't hamper my powerful cerebral machinery!

Looking forward and (upward!) to seeing you again.

Friendly-ly, [sic]

Henri Holec

Text (3)

21st March 1979

Dear Colleague,

I wonder if I could remind you gently that I would like to receive a copy of your Berne paper as soon as possible so that it can be distributed before the Colloquium. So far I have only received 1 paper.

Best wishes.
Yours sincerely,

Professor H.G. Widdowson

Figure 3. Writing as conversation (Source: Holec, 1980, pp. 196-197).

The letters thus form three speaking turns. Holec proceeds to analyze the correspondence in terms of interactive and illocutionary structure and also at the level of content; he considers these three areas to be the most significant in examining this type of written dialogue (1980, p. 198). Holec also makes the point that an individual writing a letter to the editor (with the author of the criticized article being written about) forms a written interaction. However, the original article, the referent, is not part of the turn (Holec, 1980, p. 199). Widdowson contends that written discourse even contains non-verbal elements just as oral dialogue does. He states:

> [in] a book on geography . . . one finds maps and diagrams embedded in the verbal text. Scientific papers will express information through diagrams and algebraic formulae. In . . . written discourse we will find such non-verbal devices as drawings, flow-charts, tables, graphs, charts and so on which are incorporated into the discourse and relate to the actual verbal text. (1978, p. 73)

Application to the Dialogue Journal

Shuy (1988 cited in Staton, Shuy, Kreeft Peyton, & Reed, 1988) asserts that dialogue journalling is the form of writing which most closely approximates conversation.

"It is much closer to actual speech. . . . It is two people talking to each other in writing, exchanging hopes and fears, evaluating, assuring, questioning, and clarifying" (Shuy, 1988 cited in Staton et al., 1988, p. 81). He contends that the dialogue journal is an extension of the note passing referred to earlier, an extension which utilizes "dialogue chaining," a term used to describe turn-taking. This turn-taking characteristic is what likens dialogue journals most to conversation.

Moreover, dialogue journals contain features common to speech such as (a) oral vocabulary and expressions, (b) oral expletives, (c) interruptions, (d) telescopic syntax, (e) address forms, (f) loudness, and (g) meta comments (Shuy, 1988 cited in Staton et al., 1988, pp. 83-84 and 86). Appendix A contains examples of each of these features.

Finally, Shuy affirms the important fact that in dialogue journals students are encouraged to write in a conversational style. The dialogue journal thus comes closer to conversation written down than does any other (academic) writing observed (1988 cited in Staton et al., 1988, p. 81).

Conclusion

The ESL conversation class poses specific problems for the instructor: (a) the course, usually, must be intuitively organized, and (b) once the class is outlined by the teacher, motivating the class to speak consistently can be a true dilemma, sometimes resulting in one-word answers and the "blank-face" syndrome mentioned above. However, by engaging in conversation through the dialogue journal, a learner can begin to think in the target language which, in turn, assists him in speaking. The dialogue journal acts as a springboard in which students can experiment with their ideas before articulating them verbally. Students need this opportunity to give them confidence; they will have been "practicing" with their teacher beforehand. The dialogue journal challenges students to push beyond what they think they can communicate, thereby liberating and empowering

them to discover deeper levels of understanding. Since written dialogue has been shown to contain aspects of verbal interaction, the dialogue journal can be considered a viable method to produce substantial conversation in the ESL classroom.

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE DIALOGUE JOURNAL

Examining the roots of the journal, which has subsequently led to the development of the dialogue journal, aids in giving this particular conversational tool historical perspective. How it came into existence and the various civilizations and influences which have contributed to the substance of this classroom tool are considered. In addition, the political and intellectual environments which surrounded and helped to form the dialogue journal are examined. Historically speaking, a student-centered curriculum started to evolve; teaching methods began to be based on what students viewed as significant to learn. Also presented within this chapter are six student populations for which the dialogue journal is applicable. In addition, descriptions are given of six different types of dialogue journals which are all conversational in nature, ranging from the audiotape journal to the computer dialogue journal. Finally, with the advent of this latter journal it can be seen that the possibilities for the future of the dialogue journal are limitless.

Past

It is helpful to first consider the environment from which the dialogue journal grew. In order to accomplish this, the journal itself, as well as the forces that created the dialogue journal, need to be examined. By viewing the motivation behind this type of journal, its value can be more fully appreciated.

Journals have been and continue to be a medium wherein what is most significant to a person can be expressed. Journals are usually a record of the private life of a person written out for review and reflection at a later date. They can also serve as a vantage point

and give perspective to the reader as she contemplates her writing. In some of the literature reviewed, a clear delineation between journals, diaries, and logs was not made. But it is the claim of the author of this thesis that journals are more than diaries, which are a simple recording of a few thoughts pertaining to a day's events rather than the processing of life. Logs are even more sparse; their purpose is only to quickly document times, dates, and immediate impressions and/or observations.

Journalling has been used for centuries to allow individuals to process their thoughts and feelings about life and their environment. This tool has been implemented in various cultures, assisting individuals to assess their journey through life. There are five primary types of journals: (a) public or communal, (b) Japanese pillow books, (c) travel, (d) spiritual or religious, and (e) personal.

Historical Evolution of the Dialogue Journal

It appears that journals may date as far back as the First Intermediate Period (c. 2181-2052 B.C.) of the ancient Egyptian Old Kingdom. A text from this period titled "Dialogue Between a Man Weary of Life and Soul," and other texts from Egypt indicate a tradition of journal-like writings of a personal reflective nature. In addition, during later periods of history journals were public in nature (Černý, cited in Harris, 1971, p. 226). "Such examples include Roman household account journals called 'Commentari'; cave paintings; the Bayeaux Tapestry, a community journal commemorating the Norman Conquest; and, on teepees of the Plains Indians, a pictorial record of the winter count of the hunt" (Lowenstein, 1987, p. 87). It could be rationalized that many paintings or artistic renderings are journalistic accounts. Thus, the above-mentioned journal examples contain historical sequences which "read" like a story. Other types of art which do not contain these sequences are not classified as journals.

A more individualized journal is the Japanese pillow book—so named because it was stored by the bedside of the writer. Poetry, fantasies, and dreams were recorded in these books. Such journals were kept by royalty, primarily the Heian court ladies (tenth-eleventh century), and were considered to be more private in nature. An example follows:

> The carriages in which I and the other ladies-in-waiting were travelling arrived at the north gate. As there was no one in the guard-house, we decided to enter just as we were, without troubling to tidy ourselves; many of the women had let their hair become disordered during the journey, but they did not bother to rearrange it . . . (Morris, 1977 cited in Lowenstein, 1987, p. 88)

Also within Japanese culture, a travel diary was used as a way to remember ancestors and to evoke the past. Between the tenth and seventeenth centuries travel became increasingly important and writing in the journals became a method for retaining past values, ideas, or traditions. In a travel diary, occasionally poetry and a narrative style were used in combination. Also, the travel journal was used as a tool to discover and experience the basic laws of Buddha and to transcend time. The following journal entry of a Buddhist is an illustration of the integration of objectivity and subjectivity which can be expressed in a travel diary:

> Thinking about my journey, the mountains and the rivers I crossed—Was it a dream or reality? Was it yesterday? Was it today? If one thinks of the present as the past, one feels old. If one thinks of the past as if it were present, one's mind is young. . . .
> Tomorrow and again
> Yesterday
> I marvel at the clouds
> Of tomorrow and of yesterday
> As I cross today
> The pass of [Mt. Utsu] Reality
> I stayed at Togoe no Shuku and rested my feet.
> (Plutschow, 1973 cited in Lowenstein, 1987, p. 89)

In addition, due to the use of poetry and different types of writing, the typical presence of a prologue and an epilogue, and the fact that the journals were copied onto scrolls, scholars believe that the journals were written for the public.

The travel journal of Europe was, however, different than its Japanese counterpart. These accounts were full of descriptions of the New World and the places encountered along the journey to the traveller's destination. Some of these journals were even published, and served as supplements to maps, describing areas which previously had not been explored (Lowenstein, 1987).

In yet another area of the world, the American tradition manifested itself through the pioneer journal, a document which was subsequently passed on to those who were about to make the same journey.

In addition, another variation on the travel journal was the war journal in America. These accounts were kept by soldiers, physicians, and civilians and usually ceased when the war ended. One prisoner of war during the American Revolution recorded events in his life in the following manner:

> We have trouble enough here, without hearing bad news, for it is enough to break the heart of a stone to see so many strong, hearty men, almost starved to death through want of provisions . . . often the cooks, after they have picked over our cabbage, will cut some of the but-ends [sic] of the stalks and throw them over the gate into the yard, and I have often seen, after a rain, when the mud would be over shoes, as these stumps were thrown over the gate, the men running from all parts of the yard . . . and nearly trample one another under feet to get a piece . . . (Kagel, 1979, p. 115 cited in Lowenstein, 1987, p. 90)

The fourth type of journal, the spiritual journal, is more private and self-involved than the previously-mentioned types. A number of these spiritual journals can be found within the Christian tradition, for example, St. Augustine's Confessions. In them the writer is very concerned about her own life and how she is living it out before God.

> [The focus is] on the writer's relationship to God and the degree of straying from religious teachings. . . .[it] is often quite stylized in its presentation, emphasizes the quest for an ideal relationship to the church and to God, and is sometimes used as a means to teach the entire community. (Lowenstein, 1987, p. 90)

The Puritans and the Quakers, new religious groups in America which were created out of friction and dissent before they came from England, attempted to control their

changing world, and to understand it more fully, through the spiritual journal. Lowenstein further explains:

> Most significantly, the Puritans used the diary to examine their feelings to ascertain whether they were worthy of salvation, a thought which daily preoccupied them. According to Puritan belief salvation was pre-determined and only for the elect, but by watching carefully, by writing and then examining one's acts in enormous detail, the Puritans believed they could interpret their fate. (1987, p. 91)

One example of this type of journal follows:

> Peevishness vain thoughts and especially pride still prevails in me. I cannot think one good thought. I cannot do anything for god [sic] but presently pride gets hould [sic] of me: but I feel a need of christ's [sic] blood to wash me from the sins of my best dutys [sic] and from all that deadness of heart, and want of spirit of god [sic] this day. (Morgan, 1973, cited in Lowenstein, 1987, p. 91)

Conversely, the Quaker journal was not as dramatic and concerned with one's salvation. Instead, it was more contemplative and reflective of life as a whole—life in its entirety. Therefore, entries were not usually kept on a day-to-day basis. The journals were sometimes published posthumously, after having received group approval for the publication. One example from the journal of John Woolman illustrates this style:

> I woke in the night and my meditations as I lay were on the goodness and the mercy of the Lord. . . . It was yet dark and no appearance of day nor moonshine, and as I opened my eyes I saw a light in my chamber at the apparent distance of five feet, about nine inches in diameter, of a clear, easy brightness and near the center most radiant. (Moulton, 1971 cited in Lowenstein, 1987, p. 92)

This type of work "emphasizes the self, often in relationship to other people, events, ideas, and religions" (Lowenstein, 1987, p. 92).

The fifth type of journal is the personal journal, which tends to be more emotional and eventually more self-expressive than the spiritual writings. Although Samuel Pepys was not the first person to write a personal journal, his journal, the major part of which was written from 1660-1669, is one of the more thorough writings in this form. It was important for Pepys to examine himself in a method similar to that of the spiritual journals. This writing enabled him to confess his misdeeds and purge himself. After his accounting he was set straight again. "[T]he hallmarks of Pepys' diary . . . [include] optimism,

concise character sketches, love of gossip and enjoyment of small detail" (Lowenstein, 1987, p. 93).

After the initial onset of the personal journal, the next type to appear were the romantic and passionate accounts written during the French Revolution. These were even more confessional and more preoccupied with the dilemmas of the author than either the spiritual or the first type of personal journal. One author, George Sands, relates her complaints about her love interest and bemoans the fact that he is not the man she had envisioned him to be: "But to whom is all this raging addressed? To you, walls of my room, echoing my sobs! To you, grave and silent portraits!" (Howe, 1977 cited in Lowenstein, 1987, p. 93).

In this century, journals have been used for the ventilation of feelings and self-expression. There are literally millions of journals being kept for this intention. Although rarely initially written for publication, some have been published. For example, Marion Milner's journal became the foundation for the book, A Life Of One's Own. In her journal she gives the reader a glimpse of the more expressive genre: "The only way to deal with them [thoughts] was to stop all attempts to be reasonable and to give the thoughts free rein . . . in dealing with myself it usually meant letting my thoughts write themselves" (1936, p. 156). Carolina Maria de Jesus of Brazil offers this description of her homeland: "I classify Sao Paolo this way: The Governor's Palace is the living room. The mayor's office is the dining room and the city is the garden. And the favela ghetto is the back yard where they throw the garbage" (Moffat and Painter, 1974, p. 293 cited in Lowenstein, 1987, p. 94). This woman's diaries were "first printed in the newspaper, then published as a book, at one time outselling all others in Brazil" (Lowenstein, 1987, p. 94).

Even though journals continue to be published, as can be seen from the above discussion, historically there has been a trend from more public journal writing toward more private writing; journals were originally easily accessible to the public, and through the

years have become more private and informal. The journal has become more and more personal, so much so that today it is initially thought of solely in this way—the personal journal.

Ira Progoff, the developer of the "Intensive Journal" and "Journal Feedback," has taken the personal journal one step further by systematizing and organizing the journalling process into various sections, including: "a daily log; dialogues with other persons, the body, events, situations, society, circumstances, and an Inner Wisdom figure, dreams" (Lowenstein, 1987, p. 95). Progoff develops his belief for this type of journal by stating:

> From the theoretical point of view, what needed to be done was to replace the authority side of psychotherapy with a method of working within oneself, a method that would be self-contained and autonomous, and would therefore sustain the integrity of the individual. (Progoff, 1975, p. 28)

In order to achieve the objective mentioned above by Progoff, this type of journal would also need to take the energy and new discoveries made by the author and integrate them with the existing self. The directive to accomplish this would need to come from the individual herself in order to be successful. Reflecting upon the creation of this journal, Progoff states:

> It would be possible to achieve this success if a person's life experiences could be fed back and forth within the journal. What would be necessary, however, was the correct sectional divisions and a means of active movement within the journal that would have an integrative effect. (Progoff, 1975, p. 29)

This same movement occurs within the ESL dialogue journal, the only stipulation being that another person, the instructor, assists in the process by helping students to glean insights, process what has been said, and formulate questions. Optimally, this entire process will continue in an upward spiral motion, helping students to grow in the understanding of their world.

Progoff, as noted above, advocates a process which involves only the individual. The process may be initiated by a workshop leader, but from that point forward the work is

meant to be carried on by the journal writer. The leader is concerned with the individual being able to reach the elan vital, the vital force, in her life; this is his desired goal.

Students not only reach into their life through the dialogue journal but experience release as well. Most likely for the first time, students are challenged to think for themselves at a meaningful level. They are allowed to explore issues and dilemmas that are important to them. Perhaps for the first time they have been asked to express their own opinions and thoughts. This is particularly true for the ESL classroom where the teacher may not have thought to solicit opinions and ideas from students before. Once students realize they can have a voice and an opinion, expression comes slowly but becomes powerful. The dialogue journal moves away from simply expressing ideas as in a personal journal and presses beyond to examining those expressions made by students.

Political and Intellectual Environment Surrounding the Development of the Dialogue Journal

After considering the historical framework of the dialogue journal, it is valuable to examine the political and intellectual thought surrounding it. First, the political background, which can be attributed to Freire, is given; he contends that essentially students should feel a sense of liberation and empowerment while they are learning. Second, several educators communicate their views on the academic environment, which was primarily influenced by reconceptualist curriculum theory, from which the dialogue journal grew. Thirdly, Wallerstein's application of Freire's ideas to the ESL classroom is discussed. Finally, these factors provide a more detailed and thorough context for understanding the dialogue journal.

The political climate. Paolo Freire has spent most of his life delivering a message of liberation and empowerment, especially for the downtrodden in the Third World. History has shown that a people rise to their level of expectation. Consequently, Freire

believes that once a person becomes literate she can subsequently realize the power she has as an individual—hence, raising what is expected of her by others. But, if she is never shown, how can she know what is available to her, or what control she has over her own life? How can she recognize this power?

Additionally, Freire points to dialogue as a vehicle through which students can gain power. Dialoguing affords the opportunity for students to examine their world—to distance themselves and view their world objectively. Thus, this conversation can initiate the process of critical thinking. The dialogue allows learners to consider their perception of reality not as static but as something that is being developed and is changing. Freire contends: "Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education. . . . preoccupation with the content of dialogue is really preoccupation with the program content of education" (1968/1970, pp. 81-82). This dialogue, as described by Freire, is carried on with the two participants contributing equally. Also, each begins by expressing his or her own fears and dreams—one participant is not more authoritative than the other. "These views impregnated with anxieties, doubts, hopes, or hopelessness imply significant themes on the basis of which the program content of an education can be built" (Freire, 1968/1970, p. 82). Lastly, Freire contends that educators must strive to understand their students' view of the world. This concept of worldview cannot be dictated to them; on the contrary, it should be realized by students and the teacher together.

The intellectual climate. According to Meath-Lang (1990), in the 1970s, the theory of curriculum in use was scrutinized in terms of "how teachers come to know their students and fellow teachers through alternative methods of teaching, research, and curriculum development" (1990, p. 12). Meath-Lang further explains the notion of "reconceptualist curriculum" which characterized this view:

> Reconceptualist curriculum can be defined as curriculum beginning with the individual in her or his world. That is, the lives and stories of teachers and students are

> examined through extensive writing and discussion. Reconceptualist educators argue that such experiences heighten consciousness . . . for students. Further, . . . writings . . . and discussion can progressively inform and reform educational practice. (1990, p. 6)

Meath-Lang (1990) also notes that Macdonald (1975) believed that curricula needed to be more humane in nature. She states that in order to accomplish this Macdonald (1977, p. 11) considered 'human intentions embodied in curriculum making', 'the micro-macro relationships that bring curriculum work alive' and the focus on process, situation, and relationships to be of primary importance.

In addition, Macdonald had earlier asserted that learning should be focused on the individual "in process in an 'actions curriculum'" (cited in Pinar, 1975, p. 402). Also, Macdonald was interested in the 'living experiences . . . encountering the curriculum' (Pinar, 1975, p. 402).

Moreover, Huebner's (cited in Pinar, 1975, pp. 217-236) position that the instructor in the average curriculum was not truly interested in students is a thought shared by Pinar. Huebner was one of many who desired to raise the consciousness of the teacher to view students as valuable contributors toward the curriculum that was being taught. He also viewed the dialogue between the teacher and students as a viable indication of what needed to be taught in future lessons.

Most importantly, Pinar, a reconceptualist curriculum expert, examines the original Latin root of curriculum, currere, which "involves the investigation of the nature of the individual experience of the public: artifacts, actors, operations, of the educational journey or pilgrimage" (1975, p. 400). He believes that lebenswelt, the student's experience of the educational journey, should be essential to the curriculum designer (1975, p. 399). Thus, curriculum theory needs to become individualized and not simply consist of a list of outcomes and objectives that are generalized for an entire class. Lastly, Pinar contends that

"currere is therefore experience in educational contexts . . . it is the kernel of a reconceived and revitalized curriculum theory field" (1975, p. 413).

The ESL classroom. Through this type of learning design, the reconceptualist curriculum, students can feel a sense of liberation and empowerment. Wallerstein, who has related Freire's ideas to the ESL classroom, asserts:

> Education should compel people to analyze and challenge those forces in society which keep them passive. This theme is based on the premise that education is not neutral and does not take place in a vacuum outside society. It either prepares people to accept or to challenge their life situations. (1983, p. 12)

In addition, Robert Mackie asserts that Freire desires only that his thinking present a statement to the silenced populations of the world and also to "the silent sectors of cultures which prescribe their voice" (1981, p. 119). Freire's liberation statements can be utilized as a basis for asking the ESL student to think critically, and not merely having the teacher deposit information into her head.

A clearer context for the dialogue journal. Jointly considering the political and intellectual environments of the dialogue journal facilitates the understanding of the thought and background of a significant tool used not only in the ESL classroom but also, increasingly, in other classrooms as well. Now, students are more able to generate and reconceive material being taught them and also to express their thoughts and opinions of the world as they view it because they, and all that they are, is perceived as an important element in the teaching process. Student contributions to the curriculum itself are currently seen as valuable, and the dialogue journal is a viable method through which to promote that type of input.

Issues and Problems Related to Teaching the Dialogue Journal

With any teaching tool or curricular aid utilized in the classroom, certain questions arise regarding the issues and potential problems it may have. The dialogue journal is no

different; it places particular demands on the teacher as well as on students. These issues inherent in dialogue journalling are also an interesting window into current educational thought.

Meath-Lang asserts: "The use of dialogue journals involves a demand for honesty that is generally not addressed in teacher preparation" (1990, p. 11). As a matter of fact, the more open the teacher is the better. Dialogue journalling by nature is a search for the essence of a subject. It should try to chisel to the core of the real meaning of what students are attempting to explain.

However, at the same time, this honesty must be kept in balance; students should be convinced that their teacher will respond to their writing in an ethical and responsible manner. Thus, it is important to ask for the students' permission to copy entries for research purposes, and also to not discuss their writing with other students or any individuals outside the classroom. The dialogue journal is to be regarded as private property.

The demand for honesty can be difficult for those not accustomed to this role. Yet one cannot hope to continue substantial dialogue journalling without it. The journalling process will become stagnant with little room for mutual growth on the part of the teacher and students if the teacher is not honest. This point is developed further: "Like my colleague, John Albertini, I have found that the functional progression and expansion of the student's journal writing across time often will include personal material and the expectation, through questioning, of some personal reciprocity on the part of the teacher" (Albertini & Meath-Lang, 1986 cited in Meath-Lang, 1990, p. 13).

Of course there are times when it is not always possible to be as honest as students are in their questioning. In some instances it is not appropriate. However, as Meath-Lang points out, "Neutral responses, direct challenge, and change of topic can limit those situations" (1990, p. 13). It has been my experience that Meath-Lang's first suggestion is extremely effective. Neutral questions as responses can be changed into excellent "critical

thinking" type questions such as: "I am not sure. What do you think about this?", or "I have never been asked that question before. I need more time to think it over. What is your opinion concerning this situation?", or "You seem to be _____ about this. How does the rest of your family (class, country) feel?" A neutral response/question given directly back to students can lead to more critical thinking on their part.

Conversely, this same neutrality which may seem necessary at times can act negatively as a blockade, preventing students from viewing their teacher as a person. There is also a potential need to control or repress the relationship on the part of the teacher. Meath-Lang further asserts: "The dilution, the washing-out of ourselves in neutrality and non-judgment might be a withholding of ourselves from the other and as potentially denigrating as is refusal to allow the other to express herself or himself" (1990, p. 16).

Thus, the teacher and the student are each struggling cooperatively with how much to reveal of their identity in the dialogue journal process. Along with this struggle, there is the inevitable negotiation of meaning as the teacher and the student, at least in my experience, try to determine what the other is saying.

This dialogue between the teacher and students can be a tremendous change for those teachers accustomed to traditional roles. The dialogue journal asks for honesty and the ability to be willing to learn from students. However, it also asks the teacher to challenge or prod each student more, particularly in her critical thinking. In addition, the teacher needs to negotiate meaning and try to examine the essence of what students are writing. Although struggling with these demands and issues can be a great challenge, the reward of observing students beginning to articulate, perhaps for the first time, who they are and how they feel is even greater.

Present

The first ever documented case of dialogue journal use was with sixth grade students—both native and non-native English speakers by Leslee Reed, a teacher in the Los Angeles, California area (Staton, 1987). Reed began using dialogue journals in 1979 and "found that the dialogue journal format . . . helps students use writing functionally, and encourages greater personal autonomy and problem solving" (Staton,1988 cited in Staton, Shuy, Kreeft Peyton, & Reed, p. ix). She used the journals "to get to know her students better, to get feedback on lessons, help with classroom discipline, and, incidentally, to involve each student in meaningful reading and writing" (Staton & Tyler, 1987, p. 8).

Before long, the dialogue journal caught the attention of researchers and scholars. Usually teaching methodology is derived from research; however, with the dialogue journal it was just the opposite.

In his forward to Dialogue Journal Communication: Classroom, Linguistic, Social, and Cognitive Views (Staton, Shuy, Kreeft Peyton, and Reed, 1988), Jerome Bruner states that the authors contend that the "shapers" of the dialogue journal base their premise on

> the fundamental assumption of Lev Vygotsky's that thought is internalized dialogue, that thoughts and ideas are first acquired by someone externally through dialogue, become internalized, and then elaborated into differentiated thought. Here the idea of dialogue is used to encourage learning, used as a means of aiding students to more effectively digest materials and knowledge that they are becoming acquainted with. (1988, p. vii)

I will claim in this thesis that not only does the dialogue become internalized and assist students in comprehending new material more fully, but that this same internalized thought becomes dialogue externalized once more, creating a cyclical pattern. As this cycle is repeated, it pushes students to begin to strive to acquire the information they presently do not possess.

Bruner (1988 cited in Staton et al.) states:

> The dialogue journal begins with a teacher, with a sympathetic teacher, who is interested much as Socrates was interested, in making it possible for students to recognize first, what it is that they already know, and then to make it possible to go beyond to things they 'do not know'. . . . Much of learning is contextual and performed best when it can occur within human dialogue. (pp. vii-viii)

Types of Student Populations

Currently, dialogue journals are used with at least six different student populations:

1. the hearing impaired or deaf student;
2. the learning disabled (LD student);
3. the bilingual student;
4. the ESL student;
5. the foreign language student; and
6. the student teacher.

This section will discuss the first four of these populations. Each of these groups brings unique language needs to the language classroom, and the dialogue journal can be adapted to fit those needs. It can help a wide range of students, particularly those whose language development has been hampered in some way outside the classroom, whether it be physical or linguistic impairment; for example, this includes physical factors as in the hearing impaired or deaf student, or linguistic factors as in the bilingual or ESL student. The dialogue journal, then, can act as a bridge over which students can move from their lower proficiency level to a higher level of written and verbal functioning in the target language, in this case English.

The hearing impaired or deaf student. For the hearing impaired student, the dialogue journal begins a process of truly learning English. This process is likened to the hearing student learning a dead language such as Latin. "English is . . . a language not relevant to their everyday lives. For them [the students] English is used only in the class-

room several hours a week. When they step outside that room they use American Sign Language" (Gemmill, 1990 cited in Staton, 1990, p. 21). Therefore, a hearing impaired student can feel very isolated since she is likely to be surrounded by English speakers at any time. Also, the learning situation for such a student differs greatly from that of the ESL student who is motivated to improve her language skills so that she can receive a better education, obtain a better job, or make a better life for her family.

Gemmill (1990 cited in Staton,1990) explains why deaf students shun using English: "One important reason . . . may be that most of these students have not received the kind of education they need to become effective writers and readers" (p. 21). Unfortunately, teaching these skills has not been a priority for those involved with hearing impaired students.

Stokoe, who initiated dialogue journal use at Gallaudet University in 1980, affirms Gemmill's beliefs. American Sign Language (ASL) and English are not the same. Stokoe (1990) states that "by itself competence in ASL will do nothing or less-than-nothing for someone who needs to learn to read and write English" (cited in Staton, 1990, p. 19). It appears that ASL does not facilitate the learning of English; in fact, it may obstruct it.

However, the dialogue journal can bridge the gap between the hearing impaired student's lack of competence in English and her knowledgeable use of the language. Writing about their experiences and their issues as well as others that are important to them help students to make English more real. In Gemmill's (1990) words, "As teachers ask the students (in their journals) to clarify their thoughts, the students begin to explore ways of making themselves better understood in print" (cited in Staton, 1990, p. 21). In essence, the hearing impaired student is becoming literate in English.

In addition to learning how to communicate in written English, the deaf student is learning conversational English, colloquialisms, as exemplified in Appendix B. This latter fact is important since it is especially difficult for this type of student to learn the more

aural-related language skills, and conversation along with its particular expressions is also an overlooked component of the curriculum (Gemmill, cited in Staton, 1990, p. 22). Thus, in addition to assisting the hearing impaired student in gaining literacy in the English language, this classroom tool also aids in developing conversational skills. The dialogue journal then helps to improve literacy and conversation simultaneously; consequently, student interest is raised. Gemmill contends that "the [hearing impaired students] need exposure to . . . language through written communication that approaches conversational usage—an exposure they can acquire through dialogue journals" (cited in Staton, 1990, p. 22).

The learning disabled student. While the hearing impaired student has more difficulty with oral language skills, the learning disabled (LD) student, who has some type of physical disability which has the potential of hindering instruction, on the other hand, needs assistance in written expression. Kreeft, Shuy, Staton, Reed, and Murray (1984) explain:

> Often their ability to express themselves orally is much stronger than their written language capabilities. Consequently, they become frustrated and are reluctant to try any writing task. One explanation for their difficulties with writing is that written language is the most complex form of communication, drawing on and requiring coordination of thinking, speaking, visual, and motor skills. (cited in Staton & Tyler, 1987, p. 4)

The dialogue journal is one method which combines the LD student's strong oral competency with his weaker written competency. It bridges the two abilities to form a more communicative piece of writing. The journal would:

1. be based directly on students' oral language competence and their often superior thinking abilities,
2. involve an individualized, flexible process of mutually constructing a message with a more competent partner, so that the student would always succeed in being understood, . . . [and]
3. require integration of specific skills in order to produce comprehensible and interesting written communication. (Staton & Tyler, 1987, p. 5)

The dialogue journal can also act as a management tool in the classroom. Using this tool, the LD student is more apt to express his feelings and give explanations as to why he reacted to a certain situation in a particular way. Furthermore, this entire process can begin to more fully integrate a student socially (Staton & Tyler, 1987, p. 7).

In addition, the fact that students can write in their journal without immediately being judged is of great value because their anxiety is reduced. Thus, they are likely to be more expressive.

Finally, it is important to note that:

> for the learning-disabled student, there is added benefit in this daily, continuous conversation: the teacher's responses provide clear, comprehensible language input for students to subconsciously absorb as a model for language acquisition. Research has shown that teachers working with the hard-of-hearing, second-language, and other students with limitations on comprehension and expression become very competent at writing to an optimally challenging level for each student, varying their language to ensure comprehension. (Kreeft, Shuy, Staton, Reed, & Murray, 1984 cited in Staton & Tyler,1987, p. 7)

The bilingual student. Another student group for which dialogue journals have been utilized successfully is the bilingual student population, with the focus primarily on the younger bilingual student.

Flores and Garcia (1984), from the viewpoints of teacher educator and teacher, respectively, discuss their reasons why they chose the dialogue journal for facilitating, guiding, and eventually evaluating bilingual children's literacy and biliteracy development. Garcia utilized the journalling process in her classroom and discovered:

1. Children's expectations about the use of written language are confirmed, i.e., written language is used across time and space to communicate.
2. Within a 2-3 week period the children had stopped copying.
3. The children thought that it was okay to make errors because they were just learning to write and that just as they learned to talk, they will also make errors in writing.
4. The function of written language comes first with the control of the form (the mechanics) following . . .

5. When a need is created to write for a purpose without restrictions, the children experience writing and reading meaningfully.

6. An interactive journal between the teacher and child creates a social function that uses written language across time and space for personal interaction. (Flores & Garcia, 1984, pp. 78-82)

Staton also asserts: "Teachers of young children find the dialogues particularly helpful in early stages of literacy instruction. The interactive dialogue, with just a few sentences each day, makes use of the young child's developed competence in oral language . . . " (Staton, 1987, p. 2).

The ESL student. Dialogue journals are facilitative for the ESL student as well. They allow her the freedom to make errors without constant correction surveillance. Students are permitted to express their thoughts, opinions, and feelings in an interactive context, reflective of language in normal use. Lindfors (1988) states that in the dialogue journals of her Zulu students in South Africa, they: "were writing for a variety of communication purposes: teaching, inquiring, joking, informing, scolding, offering, requesting, seeking clarification, complimenting, apologizing, explaining, expressing opinions, making conversational comments, thanking, comforting, reflecting" (1988, p. 138).

Moreover, negotiation of meaning is virtually inherent in dialogue journalling. This is the process in which two participants in a conversation work together to interpret or work out the other's meaning and strive to continue the conversation. The dialogue journal thus gives the ESL student an opportunity to practice this skill which is overlooked in many classrooms today.

Lindfors (1988) asserts:

> As the students and I 'talked together' in the journals, . . . we worked to write interpretable messages for the partner and to interpret the partner's message, and we responded to one another in ways that kept us going. One student had written in an early entry: 'I'll write to you . . . I want to communicate.' And communicate we did. (p. 136)

Since these functions do occur within the dialogue journal they strongly support the notion that this type of journal is indeed related not just to written dialogue but also to verbal dialogue.

Types of Dialogue Journals

Not only are there various types of student populations in which dialogue journals are used, there are also at least six types of dialogue journals:

1. the audiotape journal;
2. the cassette notebook;
3. the oral dialogue journal;
4. the response journal;
5. the dialogue journal used in content areas; and
6. the computer dialogue journal.

Although other variations of the dialogue journal do exist, as in reading dialogue journals, each of the six types just mentioned appear to be clearly defined by a particular procedure. In addition, the dialogue journals presented here tend to be oral in nature, and the purpose of this thesis is to illustrate the conversational bent of these journals.

The audiotape journal. The first type of dialogue journal, the audiotape journal, was developed to increase the student's fluency, to raise her awareness of pronunciation difficulties, to give her a chance to speak with a native English speaker, and to provide for more efficient use of time for the teacher. Students do no writing, but instead use an audio-tape for their journal entries. Their interaction with the instructor is solely on tape.

Students can choose a topic, or it can be teacher-assigned. Entries are commonly made once a week, which is more facilitative for the instructor, especially if the class is large. Students record their entries (several minutes in length), and then rewind the tape so that the teacher does not have to search for the entry. It should be noted that students must

purchase their own tape. If they do not have access to a tape recorder, perhaps a language laboratory can be used.

Next, the teacher writes each student's name on a page of a notebook so that while aurally reviewing the entries he is ready to note thoughts or observations. Some teachers create a pronunciation chart to determine the sounds which are causing students difficulty. This can be a general or specific diagram, according to the sounds being studied in the class at the time.

After the teacher has finished listening to the tape and writing observations, he usually affirms the student's efforts and orally records what he likes about the topic or story. Then the teacher begins a clarification process; for example:

1. "When you were talking about your family, I am not quite sure what you meant when you said . . . "
2. "Next time try to speak a little louder because I want to hear everything you say."
3. "I want to know what a _____ is. Please explain it to me. Thanks."

The teacher then mentions pronunciation successes and difficulties so that students can obtain a sense of perspective in this area. Many students have difficulty explaining personal pronunciation problems and do not know how to achieve pronunciation success. Some examples of this "correction" process might be:

1. "You're improving with the "th" sound. I know it's hard to do."
2. "You don't have trouble with "t" at the beginning of words but you seem to at the ends of words. (The teacher then gives a few examples.) Please remember to say this sound more clearly."
3. "Don't forget to pronounce the "j" sound. I know you don't have it in your language so it's hard to remember to say it. Keep trying."

The teacher may or may not continue with grammatical comments after the pronunciation response. This grammatical response is also a few minutes long. It is meant not to overwhelm students, but instead to give them enough to work on and motivate them to do better.

The cassette notebook. The cassette notebook is similar to the audiotape journal in that they both involve teacher-student interaction on tape. However, generally, the audiotape journal is limited to conversation-type activities, whereas the cassette notebook can be utilized for numerous language skills. For example, the cassette notebook can be used as a supplement to writing, in place of writing, or as an in-class conversation activity. Miller (1990) explains more fully:

> Use the cassettes for a variety of assignments in the parameters of your course. They may relate to almost any skill or topic that your class is covering, and may or may not include paper-and-pencil components. Consider using structured exercises, open-ended responses/reactions to class activities or materials, grammar-based practice, or using the cassette notebooks in preparation for writing or speeches. . . . (p. 1)

To establish the procedure, students again must buy their own tape and preferably have access to their own tape player; if not, the teacher can easily arrange for one—perhaps through a language laboratory. Although it is a cumulative process, each teacher can decide for himself how many times per week and for what length of time students will tape themselves. Miller (1990) gives three sample ideas that work well with a cassette notebook:

1. After studying two-part verbs, supply each student with a list of three verbs which have some sort of contextual cohesion. Ask them to write a dialog and perform it on their cassettes. They may do this alone, or with a friend. This could be adapted for use with other vocabulary items or structures such as questions or modals. . . .

2. Assign a grammar exercise that lends itself to speaking or pronunciation. Plurals, simple present, and simple past are all troublesome in terms of pronunciation. As you listen to their responses, you might want to circle errors on a photocopy of the exercise. This will help you streamline your oral response. . . .

> 3. Students can 'draft' compositions of all sorts. Working from their tapes and your suggestions they can produce notes with which to write their papers. This is a perfect opportunity to introduce differences between written and spoken English in terms of register and tone, punctuation, indirect speech, transition words, etc. . . . (p. 2)

It is quite evident, then, that the cassette notebook is a versatile and useful tool in the language classroom. However, its main disadvantage is that each topic and task can vary greatly, although both of these components can be adapted to begin at an easy level and then become increasingly more difficult.

As with the audiotape journal, the teacher writes down comments while he is listening to each tape and later records them. Students will then listen to this feedback on the tape after it is returned by the teacher. The teacher's responses are similar to those of the audiotape journal. Pronunciation and fluency comments are made, but there is more of an emphasis on grammatical errors.

The oral dialogue journal. The nature of the oral dialogue journal is also verbal. At the end of the journal, students are encouraged to make a five-minute impromptu speech, and throughout the entire process there is an emphasis on students discovering their identity within the new culture in which they are living. Shah (1990) describes this type of journal:

> The oral journal offers an opportunity for student and teacher to interact in a communicative social process. In this process, the student has a chance to think about, discuss, and thereby discover his new and changing values and to build self-esteem by redefining himself in his new bicultural role as he receives validation of his unique worth and dignity from his teacher and his peers. (p. 2)

The basic idea behind the oral dialogue journal is the thought process known as "clustering", in which an individual presents a single idea and then the entire class brainstorms for different but related ideas. The process is initiated with a pre-activity discussion. Shah (1990) describes the process; initially, the teacher provides one cassette tape to each student. He then supplies the first topic: "What makes you your own person?" and a general class discussion ensues. Next, the teacher writes responses to the question on the board;

sometimes this can take the form of a list such as that which resulted from pondering the topic of "'maturity': calm, intelligent, considerate, independent, patient, helpful, determined, and confident" (p. 3). The teacher then asks the class to contribute their examples. From this point, groups of four are formed to discuss a topic related to the responses on the board, such as: "Describe the first time you felt like an adult. Why did this occasion make you feel adult?" (Shah, 1990, p. 3). Each group must reach a consensus and present its results to the class, answering, for example, the following questions:

a. What is the best thing about being your own person?

b. the worst thing?

c. the scariest thing?

d. the thing you're most proud of? (Shah, 1990, p. 3)

This discussion usually takes one and a half to two hours and it produces a substantial journal topic. Each student then discusses this topic on her individual tape, an assignment for which she is allowed one week to complete. The length of a student's entry is left to the teacher's discretion.

Shah then gleans individual topics from each student's first journal entry on tape. These same topics are used to formulate the final project—an impromptu speech. She explains: "In my response to the first journal entry, I choose an issue in the student's entry that the student seems especially interested in or that looks like it has potential for discussion and I ask the student questions about that issue" (1990, p. 3). Then the teacher asks a student to speak on the issue in the next entry. This cycle continues to repeat itself until the end of the term.

As the teacher is listening to the taped entries, the record keeping process is similar to that of the audiotape journal and cassette notebook. The teacher keeps a notebook with a page for each student. He makes notes on the previous work and writes down a topic for the new entry. The instructor can keep a topic list as a reference guide while listening to a

tape. It is particularly important to be aware of sentences which will create strong thesis statements for the impromptu speech. Below is a sample progression throughout the entries:

1. How will you change at SFSU [San Francisco State University]?
2. What will your life be like in five/ten years?
3. How much do you plan for the future? What kinds of things? Do you think you plan enough? Too much?
4. Do you wait until you're old to do what you really want? What do you gain by waiting? What do you lose?
5. What's more important to you, to fulfill your inmost desire or to make a lot of money? Why?
6. How can you, personally, make money and help people, too?

   Impromptu Speech Topic: It is better to work to help people than to work just for the money. (Shah, 1990, pp. 4-5)

Before making the impromptu speech, students are told they will only have five minutes in which to make their point. Even though the thesis statement for this speech is a composite of their work, they are encouraged to disagree with it.

The oral dialogue journal is thus a strong and versatile tool for classroom use, especially for ESL classes. "[Students] receive validation from [their] teacher and peers and [it] combine[s] thinking and speaking skills" (Shah, 1990, p. 6). However, it is important to make certain the questions are clear; for example, the meaning of the first question mentioned above (Shah, 1990, pp. 4-5) can be ambiguous. The teacher may have to clarify exactly what kind of change he wants to have discussed. Also, within the questions viewed as a group there seems to be a highly individualistic orientation and this may not be as successful as less individualistic questions, especially for certain cultures.

In addition, this type of journal cannot be used at all levels. It can only be implemented successfully in the high intermediate or advanced classes. The biggest disadvantage is that it may not work well with a variety of cultural groups, as is the case with

writing before speaking. It is more facilitative for some populations to be able to think and process more thoroughly what they want to articulate before actually doing so. The primary method by which to motivate students to think is through writing—writing which will stimulate learners to think at deeper levels. This is found within the written dialogue journal.

The response journal. Another type of journal, the response journal, also has oral elements. Les Parsons, a teacher for more than twenty years, is its creator. Reacting to teachers' comments about journalling—for example, "I've tried journals and they don't work!', 'We did journals last year', and 'I'm tired of journals!'" (Parsons, 1990, p. 1)—he decided to inject the journal with vitality. In addition, Parsons views the response journal as a method of integrating the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—into a whole.

He explains further:

> A single writing task, for example, may engage a student in a range of discussion, composing, editing/revising, and reading tasks in a recursive and blended manner! . . . Response journals reflect the integrated nature of language use and the importance of a process orientation in a classroom setting. (Parsons, 1990, p. 6)

Response journals can be written after various classroom activities such as independent reading, films, television programs (including soap operas and situation comedies), rock videos, advertisements in print, newspapers, and magazines. Parsons gives sample worksheets for each medium used, which students work from and thus respond to in their journals. An example of these directions is given in Appendix B. In essence, then, "a response journal is a notebook or folder in which the student records her personal reactions to, questions about, and reflections on:

> *what they read, view, listen to, and discuss;
>
> *how they actually go about reading, viewing, listening, and discussing." (Parsons, 1990, p. 3)

Appendix C contains a diagram which delineates the various uses of the response journal.

Within this method, there are two situations in which students actually dialogue. In the first, learners can write more private entries and either the teacher or a peer responds to her entry. Parsons has detailed a worksheet to help initiate this writing process. Each student can choose when to write a private entry. Appendix D contains the worksheet, "Responding to Who You Are" (Parsons, 1990, p. 75), which gives cues to stimulate this type of writing.

The second situation in which dialogue occurs is a student/teacher conference. This is learner-centered and provides a time for questions and concerns to be voiced. Parsons asserts that "the conference should be an exchange of views and a problem-solving discussion, not a 'third-degree' (Parsons, 1990, p. 45). The session should be an open forum between the teacher and a student. A student should also be encouraged to see if there are problems with her performance in her response journal. If she is able to identify these areas and find solutions of her own, she will develop into a stronger learner (Parsons, 1990, p. 47). Parsons also states that the teacher "should try to get students to place specific experiences into a larger context, synthesize a variety of print and media experiences, or reflect on why and how they read the way they do" (1990, p. 48). If a student needs more work in a particular area, then she can negotiate a contract with her teacher. A sample record sheet for a student/teacher conference is as follows in Figure 4:

Student's name: _____

Conference Date:	Issues Raised	Action Taken/ Goals Set
Feb. 23	1. Dave wanted me to read aloud to the class some poems from Class Dismissed Two; he really likes them.	1. He's going to read some of his favorites to the class.
	2. Dave and Susan want to write an anthology of original poems together (see contract) based on Class Dismissed Two.	2. The project will be finished in two weeks (March 8); independent study, worth 10%.
	3. Dave's had trouble resolving differences with Gary in discussions this week. He's not sure why.	3. Must monitor the next few discussions; talk to Gary; Dave will "track" the problem in his journal responses.

Figure 4. Parsons' sample record sheet for the student/teacher conference (Source: Parsons, 1990, p. 49).

The dialogue journal use in other content areas. When used in other content areas, the dialogue journal does not have a distinct verbal element. However, it has proven to be quite an effective tool outside of the language arts subject area. Staton asserts: "Without such dialogues in some form—oral or written, students cannot become active participants in constructing knowledge which is truly theirs" (1989, p. 1). She also contends that within the dialogue journal knowledge of the world and personal knowledge become integrated (1989). In addition, Staton claims: "In this integration, one's direct experience gains increasingly powerful and far-reaching meanings, and the knowledge one acquires about the world and its tasks is increasingly made personal and one's own" (p. 1). Here, emphasis is placed on use in mathematics and science classes in order to show the dialogue journal's versatility and strength.

This type of tool, the dialogue journal, acts as a link between students, the teacher, and the content area (Little, C., Seidenstein, B., Seidenstein, R., & Madison, J., 1989). When used in the mathematics classroom, students' entries "expressed personal likes and dislikes regarding math as well as their (mis)understanding about the subject" (p. 8).

For Little (cited in Little et al., 1989), utilizing this tool assisted her the most in "assessing student performance, . . . and getting feedback on her teaching" (p. 8). Bennett Seidenstein (cited in Little et al., 1989), as well, has successfully used dialogue journals in his physical science classes. He soon learned that his students basically fit into three different groupings in terms of the dialogue journal:

> The above-average students seemed to understand the purpose of the journal and used the opportunity to do reflective writing and to communicate personally . . . about course material. The average students struggled both with the concepts and material of the course and with the idea of journal writing. . . . The below-average and unmotivated students wrote very brief statements regarding course content and rarely made comments on the personal level. (1989, pp. 8-9)

Both Little and B. Seidenstein strongly believe that their teaching was more centered on the students' needs. Even more important is the fact that students began to see the class as more than simply a rote learning experience. Both teachers and students believed that the dialogue journal made an effective contribution to the classes (p. 9).

Rose (1989, p. 6) also believes the dialogue journal helps to internalize and personalize the material being taught. She has specifically devised a method for recording entries, rather than having students simply write about how they feel about their particular class.

On the first day of class, Rose (1989) explains to her students that on the right-hand pages of their notebook they are to write in an unstructured way about whatever they desire. She states, "I encourage students to write about how they feel about mathematics, the class, the teacher, the textbook, tests, . . . write definitions in their own words, ask questions, or take a problem they can't solve and write about it. . . ." (p. 6). The left-hand pages of the students' notebooks are for the free-writing exercises in which the students

write a response to a topic or question. At the beginning of class the students review what they still may not understand from the day before. Or the students may write at the end of the class summarizing what they learned that day. Rose claims: "Freewriting during class can refocus students on the material or allow them to express frustrations or ask questions. It can also be used before an exam to clear students' minds, or at any point of the class for responses to questions" (1989, p. 7). She strongly asserts that there are advantages for students as writers, the teacher as reader, and advantages attributed to the reader-writer interaction. These are included in Appendix E.

The computer dialogue journal. In addition to the dialogue journal being utilized more and more within other content areas such as mathematics and science, the computer dialogue journal is increasingly becoming a reality for students. Historically speaking, it is not possible to identify exactly who or what force is responsible for the development of the computer dialogue journal; it appears to have evolved due to the increasing influence of technology on education. It is currently being used at Gallaudet University and at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf within the Rochester Institute of Technology. Computer dialogue journals may currently be implemented at other locations as well, but the institutions cited are the most prominent, and material regarding their use has already been published as well. Because of its proven efficiency in teaching writing to deaf students, the dialogue journal is one bridge which enables such learners to compose on computers.

In this type of journal, the dialogue between the teacher and students is still maintained, but it is recorded on computer disks instead of in notebooks. However, there are some differences. Trent Batson (cited in Staton, 1990), of the English Department at Gallaudet University, found that students wrote more on the computer than on paper (p. 35). There does not appear to be one particular reason why this is true; perhaps it is

because the computer screen seems like a neutral non-judgmental space within which to write. Batson also believes that for the teacher, the computer is more freeing. He contends:

> It's much easier to slip out of the role of teacher when I get caught up in the unfolding moment of conversation. . . . Ironically, the computer, which seems almost the essence of the dehumanized, controlled society, may allow for greater freeing of creativity. (cited in Staton, 1990, p. 34)

Regarding the mechanics of computer journalling, when students write they keep one file on a computer disk for their dialogue journalling. However, it may be necessary to create new files as the term progresses. In addition, since the instructor must collect and read each student's dialogue journal disk, it is helpful if students purchase an extra disk so they will not be impeded from subsequent writing (Batson, cited in Staton, 1990, p. 34).

A potential problem is that since a disk is small, it may be easily lost. There is no single way to combat this. Also, at times learners forget that their disks may be destroyed if they are placed near credit cards or other magnetized items (Batson, cited in Staton, 1990, p. 34).

In addition, occasionally students simply have a difficult time adjusting to working with a computer. It may be more confusing in its newness than it is helpful. In this situation, Batson (1990, p. 34) recommends that the instructor allow students to return to pen and paper if they would like to.

Also, it is ideal for each student to have her own personal computer instead of using a computer lab, which is more "public." However, it may not be possible for the student to have access to a computer of her own, which is true of the teacher as well.

An added dimension of the computer dialogue journal is that of electronic mail. Adele Friedman (1990) has developed a method by which to send messages to others' dialogue journals via the computer. She is the Chairperson of the Department of Liberal

Arts for the National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester, New York. This Department

> [provides] . . . [e]ducation in all deaf classes, and support for deaf students in Liberal Arts courses and programs. [The] . . . [NTID] climate promotes humane and humanistic use of computers as a tool in non-technical areas to enhance teaching, learning, and social life. (Friedman, 1990, p. 1)

Friedman has also detailed how to write marginal comments on a student's text in order to differentiate the teacher's comments from a student's writing.

Conclusion

Considering the dialogue journal within its historical framework gives it a definite position in time. The political and intellectual influences which helped form the dialogue journal assist in providing a context for this classroom tool. Understanding that the dialogue journal was developed to be student-centered and to impart a sense of empowerment to students lends this teaching tool strong support. Examining the issues involved in utilizing the dialogue journal in teaching illustrates what truly takes place when using journalling in the classroom. Furthermore, the various student populations and types of dialogue journals in current use point to its versatility. These combined factors help to enable more complete comprehension of how this type of journal was shaped, and how and with whom it can be effectively implemented. Lastly, by discussing computer use, it can be seen that the possibilities for adaptations of dialogue journalling are broad.

CHAPTER 3

THE DIALOGUE JOURNAL EXPERIMENT AND FINDINGS

Having established the basis for how the dialogue journal resembles and reflects oral communication and then reviewing the history of this classroom tool, it is important to examine several statements concerning its actual use in the classroom. Thus, each section of my research is precisely delineated and includes brief comments about the findings of each segment of the experiment, as well as ideas for future improvement. I have outlined my target group to clearly indicate what types of students participated in this study. The dialogue journal procedure is then presented along with its response process. In addition, my questionnaire along with the findings derived from it provide solid evidence of the validity of the dialogue journal in stimulating conversation. Finally, my own observations and conclusions formulated through teaching experience with the use of the dialogue journal, contained within Appendix M, are presented to indicate how the dialogue journal fits into an existing curriculum and enhances conversation in the language classroom.

Description of the Target Group

The research was conducted with a Level V class through Glendale Community College's Adult Education Program. The Level V course is the most advanced non-credit ESL course currently offered at the Community College. Realistically, however, this particular group's level was high intermediate.

The class had an average of sixteen students from various ethnic backgrounds—Hispanic, including students from Mexico, Central America, and South America; Armenian, including students from Lebanon, Iran, and Armenia; and Asian, including

students from Korea and China. The students' ages ranged from eighteen to fifty. Within the class, more than half had foreign high school diplomas, while others had begun university work in their home countries. The remaining students had not finished high school; they had only completed a junior high school level of education.

A portion of the class was repeating Level V; students in this particular group had not passed the non-credit placement test at the end of the previous semester. Still others had been promoted to Level V from Level IV. Finally, another segment of the class had "walked in" late the previous semester and were placed in Level V via a placement test.

The class met Monday through Thursday evenings for three hours. It was an integrated skills class in which reading, writing, listening, and speaking instruction were all incorporated. Grammar and pronunciation work were supplementary.

The Dialogue Journal Procedure

Although it would be best to initiate the dialogue journal process the first day of class, because of the highly transitory nature of Adult Education classes it is more advantageous to begin the process the third day of class. For this same reason students write in their journals every night instead of two or three nights a week. It is also desirable to collect the journals each night at the end of the dialogue journal component of class instead of asking for them once a week.

Examination blue books are purchased for students to retain regularity of form. After students are given blue books, the teacher explains that members of the class will be writing in their books each day and that this will increase writing and conversation skills. The teacher then refers to the journal as a "dialogue journal" at each subsequent instance. She states that the dialogue journal is a neutral element of the class through which the teacher and students can interact. She also states that writing and thinking before speaking

will eventually generate more conversation. The hypothesis is that the dialogue journal would prepare or prime students for more meaningful conversation later in class.

Students are then asked to introduce themselves to the teacher as if they were writing a letter. The teacher requests that they include such items as birthplace, languages they currently speak, the level of education they have attained, and any leisure activities they pursue; in general, anything about themselves which they want to write. The objective of this self-introduction is to allow students freedom of expression and also time to explore their writing skills. In addition, it can act as a diagnostic measure providing a means for the teacher to assess where students' individual skills lie within the total range of the class. This time of writing lasts approximately twenty to twenty-five minutes.

A few minutes after students start writing, even during the first session, the teacher silently walks around the classroom, reads students' dialogue journals, and begins to dialogue one-on-one with them. For the most part, this conversation consists of:

1. suggestions—"I think your opinion/idea may be stronger if you told me about . . . "
2. requests for clarification—"Please explain this to me. I am not quite sure what you mean here in this sentence."
3. negotiations of meaning—"I still don't quite understand what you are trying to convey. I think this is what you mean, but you need to explain it to me again."
4. corrections—"Please look over your preposition use. Don't forget to check your periods."

Parenthetically speaking, the teacher should assist students in developing their guessing skills, a vital part of conversational competence. For example, after an initial vocabulary question has been asked the teacher can reply: "Do you have any idea what it means?" or "What do you think this word might mean?" Predictive and guessing skills are thus strengthened by this type of questioning. In a sixteen-member class, it may not be

possible to dialogue with each person, but at least half the class should be reached. This personal dialogue does not appear to interrupt the students' writing and thinking process. Rather, it seems to enhance it by leading them into a deeper level of thinking. Furthermore, students tend to welcome this one-on-one period with the teacher because it is less frightening conversationally than to perform in front of others in the class; thus, students attempt to converse more frequently.

Also, during this time period, the teacher takes note of various themes in students' writing. This is especially valuable during the first week because she does not know her students well and cannot assign topics that are of interest to them. Therefore, as she is dialoguing with students she is also noticing the general themes in what they are writing. At this point it seems best to have the teacher only make her observations mentally but then write them down quickly afterwards. After the class becomes accustomed to this process, however, it might be useful for the teacher to carry a notepad in which she writes down very brief notes to help her remember her observations which are later developed into questions for students.

In addition, as the teacher proceeds from student to student she also formulates questions in her mind to ask the students later during the conversational component of the class. (This may appear taxing at first but it soon becomes easier and easier, especially as the teacher gets to know her class better throughout the term.) Examples of questions that would be appropriate to ask on the second day of class would be:

1. What do you do in your spare time? (assuming that "spare time" is understood)
2. What languages do you speak, and how did you learn each of them?
3. How long have you been in the U.S., and why did you decide to come?

Any one of these questions are posed to the class as a whole and anyone who feels comfortable enough answers. Alternatively, pair or small group (discussion) work is done.

Writing the question on the chalkboard proves to be facilitative because it acts as a point of reference for students.

Whether the class is divided into smaller segments or not, the teacher continues to play the role of facilitator by asking questions similar to those mentioned above, the goal of which is to constantly draw out students and bring them to a deeper level of processing. The length of the conversation component is usually from fifteen to twenty minutes, ideally with everyone participating in a more meaningful level of conversation.

The second day of dialogue journal writing follows the same procedure. Since the journals are begun on the third day of a four-day week, in this case a Wednesday, then the the second day of dialogue journalling will be the final day of the week, Thursday. At the end of the discussion period on Thursday the journals are collected, ready for responses from the teacher.

This is probably the most stimulating segment of the entire process. It is very exciting to observe students develop and progress over the semester, and yet the teacher also agonizes over students she knows could have achieved more, such as one who had processed a question and its answer in no more than a few sentences. An example of the response cycle is given in Appendix H.

Some of this process of developing written responses is directly related to critical thinking, which currently happens to be a popular topic in educational methodology. However, I intend here not to equate all writing development problems to difficulties in critical thinking but rather to help the teacher realize that students need merely to be motivated in order to more deeply consider the question(s) their teacher is asking them. This requires students to begin to think more readily in their new language, which will in turn facilitate their English conversation.

Responding to students' journals usually takes from two and a half to three hours outside of the ESL class. This may seem to be an inordinate amount of time, but it is worth

the effort in light of the conversational gains made (Appendix J). (This amount of time should also not be too unusual for an advanced level, where commonly more homework must be read.)

The teacher begins the entire response process on Friday by first reading each entry that individual students have made. Journals are collected Thursday night since class is never held on Friday. This is the first time for that week that the teacher is able to read students' entries in their entirety. The teacher then writes a response at the end of the last entry written. Invariably, not all students will come every day; thus, students do not all have the same number of entries. The teacher begins the response with the student's name and then writes an encouraging remark such as: "Very good!," "Excellent!," "You're improving," "You're starting to think your ideas through," or "This is very interesting; I want to know more." Then the teacher begins to work through the entries, beginning with the first one of that particular week, and makes comments. This process can be compared to the dialoguing the teacher does in class with each individual student. As mentioned previously, that particular dialogue consists of: (a) suggestions, (b) clarifications, (c) negotiations of meaning, and (d) corrections (the same kind of covert correction made in the face-to-face dialogue with the teacher). The questions are therefore similar; the teacher simply writes more of them when she responds to the dialogue journal entry. Examples of these types of questions are given in Appendix F.

For each entry that students write the teacher begins a new paragraph of comments. These paragraphs may only be two or three sentences in length. It is important that the teacher refrain from grading the dialogue journal, as that detracts from its original purpose.

The teacher then returns the dialogue journal to students on Monday. They are asked to answer the questions contained within the teacher's response. Since the population in an Adult Education class is not always consistent in attendance, some students may not be present on Monday and thus are unable to write in their journal until Tuesday or

even Wednesday. But the majority of students answer the teacher's questions on Monday, with a few continuing on Tuesday.

On the second day of the second week the teacher writes a question on the chalkboard derived from the entries her class has made. (These questions tend to be more interesting to students and more motivating as well. This particular question needs to be clear and straightforward, yet also offer the students an opportunity to think more deeply; for examples, refer to Appendix G.) The question is read aloud by the teacher and followed by a simple explanation. However, if there is too much talking on the part of the teacher, students will not be forced to think on their own. Students then write the answer to this question; afterward, a discussion ensues in pairs, small groups, or within the class as a whole. A new question is given on Wednesday and Thursday. At times it may be necessary to continue discussing a particular question for two days due to its complexity. The teacher then facilitates starting the cycle again. Appendix H shows the entire dialogue journal process.

The Questionnaire

To assess the attitude(s) of students toward the dialogue journal, and to determine if they considered this technique to be a valuable tool for their conversational development, a questionnaire was used. The questionnaire attempted to answer three basic questions:

1. Do students perceive the dialogue journal as helping their conversation (or helping them to participate in conversation)? In other words, do they see a direct relationship between what they write and what they say in conversation?
2. What are their attitudes toward the dialogue journal in terms of time spent, the teacher's comments, and "undercorrection"?
3. Do students' attitudes change over the term?

The same questionnaire was administered at the midpoint and at the end of the semester. Appendix I contains the questionnaire given to the class.

Henerson, Morris, and Fitz-Gibbon (1978, p. 29) state that when giving a questionnaire respondent anonymity is important so as not to cause the evaluator to lose objectivity when analyzing the data. Thus, students did not write their names on the questionnaires. However, by the midpoint of the semester, the teacher could recognize students' handwriting if they chose to write any comments after the questions. This recognition tended not to impede the evaluation process, though.

The directions on the questionnaire were simple and direct, and the teacher was prepared to give any oral clarification as it was needed. The descriptors used ("almost always," "often," "sometimes," "never," and "not sure") are several of the most commonly utilized, according to Henerson et al. (1978).

Regarding the questionnaire itself, a combination of close-ended (nine) and open-ended (one) questions were used to ensure more uniformity. Also, this combination of questions was used so that students did not have to feel that only one of the descriptors encompassed their entire range of attitudes with any one question. Henerson et al. (1978) suggest that students have an opportunity to write their opinions at some point in the questionnaire. Open-ended questions as well as a place for comments at the end of each question permit the ventilation of feelings: "People can express their exact opinion in an open-ended response whereas if asked to simply check items they may feel that they have been forced into responses that do not exactly match their attitudes" (Henerson et al., 1978, 61). Three drafts of the questionnaire were made to filter out any peculiar wording in the questions; the fourth draft was the one actually employed.

Results and Analysis

Examining students' attitudes can be helpful in determining the validity of a teaching procedure. This is true of the dialogue journal as well. The final percentages of the answers on this questionnaire (p. 56) were indeed enlightening. Some of the attitudes were not as strong as I would have liked, while others surprised me. Generally speaking, the evidence indicates that students believe that the dialogue journal does prepare them to speak. Thus it is a viable tool through which teachers can stimulate conversation.

I will now address the three theoretical questions (stated previously) that were posed before and during the creation of the questionnaire. I will also be primarily concerned with the "Almost Always" category of the questionnaire as that indicates the strongest attitude. With some of the total figures it was not possible to arrive at an exact one hundred percent sum, which accounts for several ninety-nine percent answers. The number of students questioned was thirteen at the midpoint of the semester and eleven at the end of the semester; thus, the numbers were essentially the same in each group. The questionnaire along with the percentages are contained within Figure 5:

Questions		Percentages					
		Almost Always	Often	Some-times	Never	Not Sure	Total
1. Is it helpful to write in your dialogue journal before you speak?	Midpoint	38%	15%	23%	15%	8%	99%
	Final	27%	9%	55%	9%	0%	100%
2. Does your dialogue journal help you to think of ideas before you begin speaking?	Midpoint	15%	23%	54%	8%	0%	100%
	Final	55%	9%	36%	0%	0%	100%
3. Does writing first in your dialogue journal help you to participate (take part) in conversation later?	Midpoint	31%	0%	61%	0%	8%	100%
	Final	9%	36%	36%	18%	0%	99%
4. Do you think that what you write is related to what you talk about?	Midpoint	23%	46%	23%	0%	8%	100%
	Final	55%	18%	27%	0%	0%	100%
5. Are my questions and comments within the dialogue journal helpful to your writing?	Midpoint	77%	23%	0%	0%	0%	100%
	Final	73%	0%	27%	0%	0%	100%
6. While you are writing, are my questions and comments to you orally (face-to-face) helpful to you?	Midpoint	58%	33%	0%	8%	0%	99%
	Final	73%	27%	0%	0%	0%	100%
7. Is there enough correction of your writing mistakes?	Midpoint	15%	31%	31%	0%	23%	100%
	Final	20%	40%	30%	0%	10%	100%
8. Is it difficult to understand my corrections of your writing?	Midpoint	8%	8%	31%	38%	15%	100%
	Final	9%	0%	18%	64%	9%	100%
		Very Little	Not Enough	Enough	Too Much	Not Sure	Total
9. How much time in class do you think is spent on your dialogue journal?	Midpoint	8%	0%	69%	15%	8%	100%
	Final	0%	0%	82%	18%	0%	100%

Figure 5. Midpoint and final percentages of the dialogue journal questionnaire.

First, it was intriguing to me that at the midpoint of the semester rather than at the final point of the semester more of the class thought that the dialogue journal helped them to speak (see questions #1 and #3 on the questionnaire). The reason, I believe, is because the

class did not continue to see the connection between writing and speaking: that writing would help speaking since these two language skills are not usually linked together. Or it could be that by the end of the term students were getting better and were more able to generate more conversation by themselves.

Also, it is my opinion that the ethnic make-up of this particular class may have affected the answer to questions #1 and #3. Asian students tended to need more time before speaking so that their correct responses would preserve "face." Thus, had there been more Asian students in the class the percentage of "Almost Always" responses might have been higher. However, at present this is only a hypothesis.

In contrast, regarding question #2, the percentage indicating strongest agreement is remarkably higher at the final point of the semester. This may be partially due to the fact that by nature writing stimulates ideas. In addition, I believe that the dialogue journal questions that were given to the students assisted in generating more ideas. Also, more of the class at the final point of the semester than at the midpoint of the semester thought that there was a direct relationship between what they wrote and what they spoke.

Furthermore, since space was provided for comments at the end of each question the following statements from different members of the class strengthen the case for the dialogue journal: (a) "It really help [sic] to prepare you for later discussion," (b) "I think that [sic] the best way to improve the inglish [sic]," and (c) "It helps me a lot." I do believe that these comments for the most part were sincere and genuine since this particular section on the questionnaire was optional. Also, I did not continually stress my original hypothesis.

The second basic question I sought to answer through the questionnaire actually had three components: (a) attitudes of the class toward time spent on the dialogue journal, (b) attitudes of the class toward the teacher's comments, and (c) attitudes of the class toward "undercorrection." In answer to the first segment of this question (questionnaire

question #9), more of the class at the final point of the semester believed that there was enough time spent with the dialogue journalling process; this may be due to the class attaching more value to the procedure as the semester progressed. As for the second component of the theoretical question, more of the class thought that my questions and comments were helpful at the beginning rather than at the end of the semester. This is seen through the responses to questionnaire question #5. However, a marked decrease is not evident, since the amount is less than five percent.

Also, a vocabulary problem could have existed within the initial dialogue journal questions and also in my responses in the class' journals, since I use some words that may be unfamiliar in order to stimulate my class to ask more questions of me, either written or verbal. However, in question #6, more of the class thought my oral comments were helpful to them at the end of the semester. In addition, the following student comments lend support: (a) "I think that when we [most likely student-to-student and/or student-to-teacher] talk face-to-face we can understand better" and (b) "Many times they [the questions asked] recalled my aspects [sic] that I had forgotten."

Finally, regarding the third component of my original question, the issue of "under-correction" is answered by questionnaire question #7. More of the class believed that there was more correction by the end of the semester. Not only was this true for the "Almost Always" category but also for the "Often" category on the questionnaire. Also, less of the class had difficulty understanding my corrections by the end of the semester; only ten percent responded "Not Sure."

Lastly, the third question I asked before and while I was writing the questionnaire: "Do the attitudes of the class change over the term?" is rather general. It is true that the views of the class did change, some not so favorably and others favorably; nothing remained stagnant. However, a better pre-experiment question might have been: "In what

areas did the attitudes of the class change?" which my questionnaire answers, as illustrated earlier.

Studying the attitudes of one class that used the dialogue journal is by no means conclusive, but the research does indicate how another ESL class of this type might respond to the use of this classroom tool. The questionnaire also points to weaknesses and strengths of relating writing to speaking in a classroom setting. Writing before speaking is valuable and is a strong language learning experience for students. However, more studies need to be undertaken to discover wider applicability of the dialogue journal.

Suggestions for Future Research

As mentioned above, the questionnaire does give some indication as to how the dialogue journal could be utilized for a high intermediate Adult Education ESL class as well as give evidence as to how one group of students perceived the dialogue journal. However, it is also significant to remember that any one study is not conclusive in and of itself. Various aspects can be examined more closely. Three particular areas—those of trust, motivation, and culture—will be discussed in relation to further research utilizing the dialogue journal.

First, one area that could be studied is how trust affects students' ideas of the dialogue journal; writing and speaking are not usually paired together, and some of the class may consistently struggle with this idea throughout the term. In other words, I believe that it takes a certain amount of trust on the part of students before they can fully enter the dialogue journalling process. Students must believe that the teacher has their best interests in mind. This is not to say that language learners do not usually need to trust their teacher, but because these two language skills may not be seen as being related together, and Adult Education students have a greater need for conversation practice than writing practice, it may be difficult for some of the class to continue in the process.

It may be helpful to first ask students, by the use of a survey, to indicate which language skills are seen as related, and why they are seen as such. Then the following question could be posed: "In class, for a certain amount of time each day, if you were asked to write before speaking, how would you respond? Would you see this as helping your speaking?" At this point, the teacher would be better informed as to what her class thinks in terms of the value of the idea of writing before speaking. She could see which part of the class might struggle with the relationship between these two language skills.

In addition, within the area of trust, it is important to consider that students may have been influenced by the first explanation I gave them of the dialogue journal process. This would have been valuable to discover in terms of how students trusted me to tell them something helpful for their conversational development. Did I compel them to believe me? Also, did students sense my positive expectations? Stated somewhat differently, how readily could I trust students' responses? In addition, was I truly open to negative answers? Essentially, trust must emanate back and forth continuously—from the teacher to the students and back again—in the research process.

Second, the question of trust directly relates to the area of motivation; how well students perform with the dialogue journal is affected by their motivation. One always seems to find students who have trouble writing, either because they do not care for writing, even in their own language, or because they simply do not want to write. This problem could be due to the trust factor—not seeing or believing that writing will assist speaking. Motivation is a difficult, if not impossible, item to measure; as psychologists will attest, mere definition is not easy to state clearly or concisely.

However, if the teacher were to: (a) give better explanations of the vocabulary used within the dialogue journal question, (b) offer examples of what students might write about in relation to the question, and (c) allow students to write for a few minutes first about what has occurred in their day to get started writing, and <u>then</u> begin writing about the question,

more insight might be provided on the issue of motivation. In order to accommodate seemingly "unmotivated students," there would need to be two groups of students—a control group in which only the regular dialogue journal procedure was used with no variations, and an experimental group in which the above suggestions were utilized along with the dialogue journal cycle. However, the final result might still leave some question as to whether or not motivation was successfully measured. It is important to also note that students' lack of motivation could also be attributed to factors unrelated to classroom skills or teaching methods, such as job or family concerns.

Finally, the third area that could be studied is culture. Considerations of culture affect the other two areas. For example, there are differences in the way various ESL populations learn language. As mentioned in the previous section, the dialogue journal may be most successful with Asian students. Initially, this is how my interest in the dialogue journal grew; I taught a class which was nearly all Japanese, and the class responded positively to this classroom tool. It seemed to me that this group gravitated toward the dialogue journalling process because of the "face" concept so prominent in Asian cultures. A Chinese student once told me that "face" is likened to self-respect. This idea of "saving face," or retaining one's self-respect, appears to be a factor in second language acquisition by Asians. In terms of learning to speak the English language, students of this particular background may feel a need to be perfect or near-perfect in whatever they say. If this is true, then tremendous internal pressure is placed on such students before they even utter a word of English. Consequently, the dialogue journal may work especially well with Asian students because it gives them a time of preparation for organizing what they want to say.

In order to effectively show whether or not Asian students perform better with the dialogue journal, an Asian population (for example, Japanese) would need to be compared to an Asian control group not using the dialogue journal. It would be important to choose an Asian student group which is fairly common in the ESL classroom such as the one

mentioned above. This may be difficult to accomplish with the typical Adult Education class since the population usually varies in its ethnicity. The study might have to be conducted through a specialized program that only offers courses to one type of student, for example, Japanese businessmen. One group would use the dialogue journal procedure and the other would not. Then at appropriate times during the semester students in both groups would have their conversation recorded. These conversations would need to be analyzed in terms of frequency of utterances and possibly also tasks or functions as utilized within the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) "Oral Proficiency Interview" (cited in Liskin-Gasparro, 1987). Individual students could be compared against themselves, but it would be more significant to observe the differences between the two groups. Perhaps later a comparison between an Asian and a Latin American group, or any other prevalent population within the Adult Education class, could be implemented.

Even though the three factors of trust, motivation, and culture have been discussed in some detail, the possibility for more research still exists. Completed studies need to be evaluated, and the researcher, whether this be the teacher or another interested person, must ask herself, at the least, several questions: (a) "Did I truly find what I originally wanted, or must I view another aspect more carefully?" (b) "Did I pose the right kinds of questions before I started the study, or did my questions lead me off on a tangent?" (c) "Did I choose the best method to obtain the information I needed?" or (d) "Did I use the best evaluation instrument through which to analyze my study and its conclusions as a whole?" In a sense, a study of this nature is a never-ending process, but it is an exciting one as new discoveries about learning to speak in a second language are made.

Tape-recorded Student Conversations

Although the questionnaires provided useful information on the attitudes of the class toward the dialogue journal, I also wanted to discover more tangible evidence of how the dialogue journal stimulates conversation. Thus, altogether I taped six students' conversations with myself, which consisted of their answers to a prompt and a question taken from their dialogue journal. An explanation of this procedure and specific statements pertaining to my claim that the dialogue journal produces more conversation follow.

First, from the original six students I chose two who had fairly consistent attendance throughout the semester. This fact was significant to me because I needed to conduct this part of the experiment with a segment of the class that was familiar with the dialogue journalling process. Due to the nature of the Adult Education system, the teacher usually receives new class members throughout the entire term—a fact which automatically eliminated a certain number of students from being considered for this section of my research. That is, students who were present at the beginning of the semester may not necessarily be attending at the midpoint or the end of the semester and vice versa.

Another factor affecting my selection of these two students was that I had to choose class members who I knew would not be intimidated by being tape recorded. Between those in the class I knew would come to the next class meeting—to speak without the journal—and those who had been with me the longest, it was difficult to choose members of the class who would fit into both categories. The fact that the teacher must be very flexible when doing research with an Adult Education class was certainly reinforced during this selection process. It would have been helpful if I had written down beforehand a list of potential participants with possible alternate choices. In addition, it would have been preferable to have had more ethnic diversity within this segment of my research; however, this was not possible due to the transient nature of my Adult Education class, as mentioned above.

Initially, I did not introduce this section of the study in any form except to state that I desired to tape record some of the class' dialogue journal conversations. Only later did I explain that: "I have a theory that the dialogue journal helps you to talk and improve your English conversation— that the dialogue journal is like a springboard." I reassured the class that I would be the only one listening; a promise which appeared to be facilitative when the actual recording sessions took place. I sat with each student chosen in one corner of the room so that it would be less noisy since a language laboratory was not accessible. (I am not sure if isolating the student and myself in the classroom during the taping of the conversation contributed to raising the level of anxiety or not; usually, within the dialogue process I walk to each student's desk and assist him or her there.)

For the actual research, the taping was done with a small hand-held tape recorder to lessen the student's fear of making too many mistakes. However, utilizing the smaller tape recorder only assisted somewhat with the concern mentioned above. I had to consistently urge the student I was interacting with to speak more loudly or clearly. I worked with one student at a time to obtain more meaningful conversation and to facilitate later transcription. Each conversation was three to five minutes in length. Even after this time period, I continued to talk with the student so that he would not feel that he had been used solely for the research. The pre-dialogue journal conversation as well as the post-dialogue journal conversation for each student were recorded within a few days of each other.

During the taping I first completely read the student's entry orally, which is not normally part of the dialogue journal process. However, I believed it would add more coherence for the transcription that was to be done later. Usually, during the facilitating process, I only read segments of the student's dialogue journal entry, which is more effective for the teacher and the student. After reading the student's work on tape, I began the process of questioning and negotiating to get at the meaning of the entry. The actual conversation transcriptions are contained in Appendix J.

Findings

Evaluating conversation can be a difficult task because this aspect of language does not lend itself easily to measurement. Verbal dialogue is not characterized by precision and absolute categorization. However, I have found that the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language) criteria for the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) are sufficient and very comprehensive for evaluating conversation. I selected the Advanced Level Form since those criteria seemed to be the most appropriate to each student's speech. In addition, the characteristics, listed in Appendix K, also include qualities that I believe are significant in a conversation. From this list, I have selected two primary areas which appear to hold the most value in terms of the dialogue journal and conversation: various topic areas and what is called "Supported Opinion" (Liskin-Gasparro, 1987, pp. 167-169). Furthermore, I will also note my own observations of conversation that was produced after dialogue journal utilization: the speech is more integrative, more student-generated, and more natural or authentic.

Through the OPI, the teacher can discover in which conversational level a student can be effectively placed. However, I was not attempting to determine how my students rated on a particular scale; this was not my intent. The criteria within the OPI clearly delineate various functions that occur in conversation. It was this functional aspect that was significant to me, and I was curious to discover if the dialogue journal reflected those tasks within speech. Not only does my work support this concept that various conversational aspects of speech are exhibited in the dialogue journal entries, it also shows that this classroom tool actually seems to stimulate several different processes within conversation.

With the dialogue journal being employed as a stimulus before speaking, a wider range of topics could be covered. Of the two students' tape recordings used for subsequent analysis, one was able to discuss two additional subject areas beyond those generated by

the question or prompt alone. This fact of more topics being covered tends to support the claim that the dialogue journal is similar to conversation that occurs outside the classroom.

In addition, I determined that the OPI's "Supported Opinion" component (Appendix K, p. 94) was most clearly reflected when the dialogue journal was used before conversation. With one student in particular, five more instances occurred in this area with dialogue journal preparation than without. This fact is also significant since the "Supported Opinion" component actually represents characteristics of the next higher level, "Superior." The features contained within this section tend to push students beyond the level at which they are normally accustomed to speaking. Conversation resulting from the dialogue journal consistently accomplishes this. As stated earlier (Chapter 2), this classroom tool assists in the critical thinking process and empowers students to examine and to be more aware of their environment. This all may be due to the style of dialogue journalling that the teacher uses; for example, I tend to push students to truly think through a topic or subject area. Also, the very nature of the dialogue journal question, as exemplified in Appendix G, helps students to form an opinion and give an example, thereby stating their reasons why they think as they do.

Aside from the data mentioned above, I have observed that the conversation ensuing from previous dialogue journal use tends to be more interactive. For example, one student spoke twenty-three more instances with the stimulus of the dialogue journal. This total was derived by adding up the number of times a student spoke without the dialogue journal being utilized first and then comparing that figure with the number of times the same student later spoke with it. The reason for this large number could have been due in part to the teacher's conversational style—how frequently she urged a student to speak. As mentioned before, I believe I may be a more "active" interlocuter than some instructors; I continue to ask more and more questions of students.

Furthermore, students appear to talk more freely when the dialogue journal is utilized first. I believe that this is due to the fact that the material has been originally generated by the learner. It is true that the teacher creates the actual question; however, each question is developed from what she has observed as being interesting to students. In other words, the question is derived from what the teacher has viewed to be students' interests.

In responding to the question, students appear to reveal more about themselves, and the writing seems to be more significant or substantive than what they may initially reveal about themselves orally, that is, without dialogue journal preparation.

Finally, the conversation stimulated by dialogue journal preparation seems to be more natural or authentic than conversation produced by typical textbook exercises. With the discussion question employed first, the resulting speech may be stilted or artificial. This was particularly true of one student who attempted to discover the solution to the prompt and whose conversation eventually became contrived and stagnant. Perhaps the student did not understand that no answer was "right" or "wrong"; even so, the verbal exchange did not reflect genuine dialogue.

Although evaluating conversation can be difficult because it cannot be easily measured, nonetheless, a few observations can be made. First, this classroom tool is much more conducive to various topic changes than is a discussion question or prompt and is thus more reflective of authentic speech. Second, the conversation ensuing from the dialogue journal not only contains more opinions but also enables students to defend those opinions through clarification and examples. This particular aspect of language can be difficult to teach within the regular conversation component of the ESL class. However, the dialogue journal creates opportunities to more easily develop this type of critical thinking. Finally, this study supports my original premise: the dialogue journal truly assists in preparing students for later verbal communication outside the classroom.

Suggestions for Future Research

The major area of this study which needs further investigation is the actual administration of the tape-recorded conversation component. Further work on procedures would make it easier to extrapolate information from the experiment and also indicate more of the versatility of the dialogue journal within the ESL classroom. Three of these procedures will be discussed briefly here: (a) utilizing different groupings of the class to tape record, (b) implementing the same topic with the dialogue journal and without the dialogue journal, and (c) advising the instructor of the tendency to want to interrupt student conversation.

First, I believe that it would have been helpful to conduct my study with the groupings that I actually create in my classroom when utilizing the dialogue journal. For example, I not only work with individual students but with pairs or small groups. One main disadvantage, though, of using groups when tape recording is that the ensuing conversation is more difficult to transcribe. Using two tape recorders, one as a back-up, would have greatly relieved my anxiety in terms of the conversations being recorded well or distinctly enough. It is important to utilize a tape recorder with a powerful microphone and, in addition, instruct the group that it is significant that individual students speak in turn. It would be helpful to limit the size of the small group to three—definitely not more than four. Nonetheless, the teacher should not stifle the conversation with the implementation of various restrictions because the resulting speech would not be reflective of true conversation.

Second, it would better facilitate comparison if the same discussion topic was used in each of the two tape-recorded sessions. Actually the use of similar subject areas might be better since the student's second dialogue might be "improved." The data gained would then show a clearer relationship between the dialogue journal and the conversation it stimulates. In addition, this procedure would indicate the thinking that the dialogue journal evokes. The discussion question must be widely applicable in order to be beneficial for the

entire class. Also, the topic should be understandable with only minimal explanation of any vocabulary or use of examples for clarification.

Finally, the teacher conducting the research must be aware that the tendency for her to interrupt exists. Although interruption is present in conversation outside the classroom, the motivation behind the teacher's breaking in on or stopping the student's speech is different. The teacher's interruptions are not always necessarily made to arrive closer to the student's point or to ask what the essence of the conversation is. Ironically, the goal of the teacher's interrupting is to try to urge a student to continue speaking, which is accomplished through repetition—converting what a student has just stated into a question. Several examples of this discourse feature are contained within Appendix J. It is likely that this interruption occurs because of the three to five minute time constraint for each conversation. Thus, it would be helpful for the teacher to be consistently aware of her potential tendency to interrupt and, in addition, to perhaps extend the time allotted for the conversation.

Upon considering how this study could have been conducted more effectively and also how the tape-recorded conversations could have exhibited more of the dialogue journal's strength, a number of questions requiring further investigation can be raised. Nevertheless, this present study has shown that the dialogue journal definitely stimulates conversation in a way which is more reflective of what occurs outside the classroom.

Conclusion

Examining the investigation and subsequent analysis of my dialogue journal experiment helps to indicate areas in which this tool is strong as well as areas in which further work could be done, such as, for example, the initial disbelief of some of the ESL class that writing can and does relate to speaking. Such thinking on the part of language learners relate to the factors of trust and motivation. Conversation in and of itself is rather difficult

to measure. However, this does not signify that no attempt can be made to at least try to determine what instrument can better examine conversation. Also, conducting research with an Adult Education class presents challenges that might not be present in other ESL classes, such as the enrollment being rather transitory in nature. Nonetheless, adult ESL students represent one of the largest ESL populations in this country. In addition, it would be interesting to observe if the dialogue journal actually helps produce more conversation from normally reserved Asian students—an exciting possibility to consider. As indicated throughout this chapter, the dialogue journal does stimulate conversation, and that at a deeper level than what is generally produced in a typical classroom. This tool reflects authentic verbal communication in that it contains many of the same processes that are utilsized in real-world situations. Indeed, the dialogue journal is a mirror of later oral communication that occurs outside the classroom.

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Appendix A

Seven Conversational Features Used Within Dialogue Journals

The dialogue journal possesses characteristics that are utilized in speech thereby making this tool appropriate to use before conversation in the ESL classroom. Mentioned below are those attributes that the dialogue journal has in common with speech. Following each example, (Shuy, 1988 cited in Staton, Shuy, Kreeft Peyton, and Reed 1988, pp. 83-84, 86) "S" signifies the student and "T" means the teacher. The numbers indicate the line being cited from the student's dialogue journal, including the teacher's comment or response to the student's writing.

1. Oral vocabulary and expressions. It has long been recognized that certain words and expressions are commonly used in writing but not in speech. The reverse is also generally true. The following examples illustrate [this point]:

   Sue: Joan was pushing Jills [sic] pencils off the table and stuff while you were out of the room. (S-5)

   Gordon: I forgot my lunch today. What a bummer. (S-91)

   Willie: Oh yes, I'd love it. (S-22) . . .

2. Oral expletives. The following expletive . . . [is] more characteristic of oral language than of writing.

   Gordon: I don't know what's wrong with me today, sheesh. (S-96)

3. Interruptions. Although it is technically not possible to interrupt a speaker after the speech is completed and although the nature of written prose seems uninterruptable, we find in the dialogue journals something which acts very much like interruption. When one writer writes comments or answers on the text or in the margins of the other writer, the effect is like that of an interruption. There are many examples of such writing in the dialogue journals. The following is illustrative:

   Teacher: Did you like seeing all of your work? No. (T-20)

   The No at the end of the teacher's sentence was written on the teacher's text by Joan during her next writing turn. Her answer to the teacher's question comes between the teacher's written sentences, much as an interruption is inserted into the flow of a speaker's conversation.

4. Telescopic syntax. In casual and sometimes even in consultative oral conversation, sentences can be telescoped by deleting the subject, especially when it is clear that the subject is the speaker or by deleting the subject and the verb, especially when to repeat these would be clearly redundant. Other types of telescopic syntax are also possible. In the dialogue journals, we find evidence of such practice, as follows:

   Carlyle: Got to go now. (S-20)

   Carlyle: Tell you more later. (S-90)

5. Address forms used as introducers or openings. In oral language practice, it is not uncommon to open one's speech turn by addressing the listener by using his or her name. This is done much less in written language and, when we see it, we often think it a bit odd (as for example, when one receives a mail solicitation to enter a sweepstakes context [sic] in which the effort to personalize a machine-typed letter includes one's name sprinkled throughout the letter). Several of the students in Mrs. R's class open their turns at writing by addressing her as Mrs. R, as the following illustrates:

   Tai: Mrs. R I'm sorry about what I said today (S-19)

   Nor is the teacher immune to this procedure:

   Teacher: Tai, you know I'll be glad to help you in math. (T-26)

6. Loudness. Technically it is not possible to speak of loudness in writing, yet, when coupled with these other oral language devices employed regularly in written prose, the effect of large, scrawling writing or print is very much the same. Sometimes this is accomplished with capitalization, as follows:

   George: 1 month is done. HIP HIP HORAY! [sic] HIP HIP HORAY! [sic] HIP HIP HORAY! [sic] (S-18)

   George: . . . the lesson was DUMB very DUMB (S-27)

7. Meta comments. When talking, it is not uncommon for speakers to monitor their own speech to the extent of not only correcting it but, on occasion, to comment on their own errors or idiosyncrasies. In writing, this is simply not done. The oral quality of dialogue journal writing can be seen in the following examples:

   Carlyle: I keep writing February for the date. (S-84)

   The teacher also makes such meta comments, as follows:

   Teacher: I thought I was the only one forgetting to write "Mar" instead of February. (T-84)

(Source: Shuy, 1988 cited in Staton et al., 1988, pp.83-84, 86)

Appendix B

Responding to Independent Reading

Directions

As you read, you think about what's happening in your book in many different ways. Sometimes, questions come to your mind about some of the characters and how they are behaving. At other times, you might be impressed by the way someone or something was described. You might even be reminded of something similar that happened to you or to someone you know.

After reading independently today, try to describe the kinds of impressions and/or questions that your reading has inspired. Some people have found the following kinds of questions useful in guiding their responses. They are only suggestions. Please respond to your reading as you see fit.

* After reading this far, what more do you hope to learn about what these characters plan to do, what they think, feel, and believe, or what happens to them?

* As you think ahead to your next day's reading, what possible directions might the story take? How do you hope the story will unfold?

* If the setting and characters were changed to reflect your own neighborhood and friends and acquaintances, how would the events of the story have to change and why would that be so?

* Do you wish that your own life or the people you know were more like the ones in the story you're reading? In what ways would you like the real world to be more like the world of your book?

(Source: Parsons, 1990, p. 14)

Appendix C

Uses of the Response Journal

Response journals provide a means . . .

* to evaluate student progress
  –as a reference file to identify and describe process and assist with formative and summative evaluation

* to explore personal responses
  –to independent and group reading experiences
  –to viewing experiences
  –after listening to readalouds
  –after a small-group discussion

*to develop small-group discussions
  –reflecting on one's role in the discussion dynamic

*to guide the student/teacher conference
  –with observations and questions prior to the conference
  –with suggestions derived from the conference

*to track independent reading
  –recording what and how much is read

*to maintain personal dialogues
  –writing back and forth to the teacher and/or peers

*to develop a source book
  –of ideas for use in the writing folder

(Source: Parsons, 1990, pp. 6-7)

Appendix D

Responding to Who You Are

Directions

Everyone needs a friend to talk to. But you don't have to have a friend in order to sort out what's on your mind. You can "talk about" your thoughts and feelings with yourself and with your teacher/reader—in your response journal. Remember to mark private whenever you want to write in this fashion. Your private entries will never be shown to anyone else without your permission.

If you want your teacher (or a special friend in class) to read and reply to what you've written, simply hand it in (or hand it to your friend) and ask for a response. Unless you indicate otherwise, your teacher will reply on a separate, loose-leaf page or a "stick-on" message tab to allow you the option of keeping or not keeping the reply in your response journal.

When you decide to write this way, find a quiet spot and don't concern yourself with mechanics or neatness or even how well or how poorly you're wording your thoughts. Even a poorly-worded entry will get you in touch with your own thoughts and feelings and show you how you felt a certain time, and that's the point of this kind of writing. Focus on the issue or feeling or idea and write whatever comes to mind. If you need a focus to begin, here are some suggestions.

* Explain your inner feelings. Try to put those feelings, good or bad, into words. This process can help you understand how your emotions work.

* Work out your problems. If you write about your worries, you may be able to understand how your emotions work.

* Explore ideas about life. Describe things you've noticed about human nature. Discuss your ideas of right and wrong. Tell what you think is important in life.

If you have something you want to write about but don't know how to start, try one of these phrases to get you going: Right now I feel . . .; Sometimes, I wonder if . . .; Someday I'm going to . . .; I hate it when. . . .

(Source: Parsons, 1990, p. 75)

Appendix E

Benefits of the Dialogue Journal in a Content Area—Mathematics

Benefits to the Student as Writer

* Affect—The writing has a clarifying and empowering effect on the student through the expression of and reflection on their feelings about the course, mathematics, and schooling.
* Content Knowledge—It increases the students' technical knowledge of mathematics, by providing better understanding of the material covered in the course and the stimulus for personal inquiry into the subject matter.
* Processes—It improves students' learning skills in mathematics through reflection on the process of doing mathematics.
* Conception—It develops students' beliefs about the nature of mathematics and the goals of learning mathematics.
* Writing Skills—It increases the comfort and competence students feel with writing.

Benefits to the Teacher as Reader

* The writing provides teachers with a diagnostic tool, by which to become aware of individual needs of their students and be able to respond to them both individually and corporately.
* It produces a record of student development, which can help the teacher evaluate the growth which occurs as a result of the course.
* It supplies feedback on the course which can lead to both short-term adjustments in the course and long-term pedagogical improvement.

Benefits due to the Reader-Writer Interaction

* Quality and Quantity of Communication—The private and ongoing dialogue between the teacher and each student builds a more positive relationship between students and teacher individually and results in enhanced classroom communication.
* Personalized atmosphere—Students and teacher grow more accountable to each other and build mutual trust as they come to know each other in a more humanistic way.
* Classroom rapport—As communication and personalization occur, the resulting positive rapport created in the classroom can enhance both personal and academic growth as students and teachers work in a cooperative and caring climate, rather than an impersonal or adversarial one.

(Source: Rose, 1989, p. 6)

4. Correction

   a. "V_____, you need to give me examples of what you write." (I wanted her to be more detailed in her writing; she was being too general.)

   b. "I think you have an excellent start here but I would like you to finish." (This situation is similar to the one above, except that in this example the student's writing has no sense of completion; the teacher is left wondering what to think.)

   c. "Please remember to indent each new paragraph. Whenever you change topics you write a new paragraph."

Appendix F

The Teacher's Responses within the Dialogue Journal

These examples have been taken entirely, with permission, from my students' journals. There were numerous responses from which to choose; however, the following most accurately reflect the four categories listed. The material in the parentheses indicate words or explanations which I thought might be helpful to the reader.

1. Suggestion

   a. "Could you give me some examples of what you mean in your last paragraph? I am curious."

   b. "Try to write down words you don't understand. Try to speak to as many native speakers as you can."

   c. (Context: "How do you know everybody has enough money?") "Is this generally speaking? Please explain more. Some of the statements seem to be general or what we call 'blanket statements.'"

2. Clarification

   a. "What exactly do you need more of in the class?. . . I need to know so I can help you learn more."

   b. "So it's true you'd rather practice your English with strangers?"

   c. "Please give me another reason why your parents let your brother go to high school and not you. If you don't know, why else do you think you couldn't go?"

3. Negotiation of Meaning

   a. "I know we talked about the last sentence in your last paragraph but I need you to explain to me why you said it. Is it for emphasis? Is it for explanation?"

   b. "What does 'going to have a movie' mean? Were you going to make a movie or show a movie? Sometimes when people get together during a holiday or special time they want to take a video of it. Is this what you mean?"

   c. "Although I appreciate your answering my questions, I'm still not quite sure what you meant here."

Appendix G

Series of Dialogue Questions

The following is the sequence of questions, beginning from the second day of the second week, about which the class wrote. If the question was not finished in the fifteen to twenty minutes that were allocated, time was given to complete it the next day.

Express something about the American way of life that you think is peculiar. Express one thing about the American way of life that you would like to change. If you could, how would you change it? [Within the first week of class, very frequently, the student will either question or complain about the American way of life. Therefore, that is why this question is placed first, even though it may seem that it should appear later in the semester.]

What is something that you would like to change about your country if you could? Why? Give me an example.

Express the importance or significance of getting an education. What can you hope to achieve or accomplish?

What would you like to be doing in two years?

What is the importance of having or setting goals?

What do you hope for your children here in the United States?

Give two ways people are discriminated against.

The Equal Rights Amendment (or ERA) was a big issue in our country for women. Should men and women be treated equally? Why or why not?

Where does discrimination come from? How does it begin?

In your opinion, what is (are) the best way(s) to learn a new language? Please include your experiences.

Is it true that the more languages you speak the easier it is to learn a new language? Why or why not?

In a language classroom, what should a teacher do and what should a student do? Give me some examples. What do you consider to be the most important language skill? Why?

What will you do over Spring Break?

(Spring Break)

Tell me about a conversational mistake you made in English. What happened and what did you do about it? Did you learn from it?

Please write about two times or situations in which you were afraid to speak English. Tell me why and how you "got out of it."

Tell me about whatever you want. For example, what you will do after this class, what or where you will go during the summer, how you feel about your English right now, etc.

If money were no object, and you could get the time off of work, where would you travel in the U.S.? Please write about at least two places and why you would visit them.

What are the advantages and the disadvantages of traveling to another country and learning another way of life (culture)?

Most of you have been here for at least six months to a year. Right now, would you go back to your country and live? Why or why not? What are the advantages and disadvantages of returning to your country after you've been here? Sometimes it's not an "either/or" situation.

Who is the most important person in your life? Why? If you can, please try to give me two examples of things they did for you.

Yesterday, you wrote about the most important person in your life and why. Now--who is your best friend and why? Does this person also consider you his/her best friend? What qualities do you respect about him/her the most?

What is one (important) thing you could have done when you were younger but you didn't? Why or why not? Could you do that thing now?

Sunday was Mother's Day. What characteristics do you think make a good mother? Please give reasons and examples.

What could you say about your father? What distinctive characteristics could you discuss about your father?

Describe at least two turning points in your life. What were they? Do you have any regrets?

What happened during the weekend?

What are you going to do after Level V? I do not mean in the summer; I mean starting in the fall and beyond.

What will you do on Memorial Day weekend? Give at least two activities.

"Free Day" (The class took this opportunity to write about the past holiday weekend.)

Name two ways you have improved in speaking and pronunciation.

Name two improvements in your listening. If you think you haven't improved, tell me why. I want details.

In the reading book, we've started to discuss "ethnocentrism." What are two things or two ways of doing things that you think are better or better done in your country?

What is one thing, try two things if you can, which you have a difficult time accepting about the North American way of life?

What are two things about this culture that were difficult for you to understand or accept when you first came here but now you have no problem with (those things)?

Write me a letter about anything you want. I would be especially interested in your comments about the class and about writing in the dialogue journals. [I tried to create an atmosphere in which the students would feel free to express their comments to me.]

Appendix H

The Complete Dialogue Journal Cycle

Step 1
On the first day the student is asked to introduce himself in the dialogue journal.

Step 2
The teacher initiates the dialogue journal with one student at a time. This process consists of suggesting, clarifying, negotiating meaning, and correcting. The teacher also acts as a "walking dictionary."

Step 2. a.
At this same time the teacher is making mental observations to write down later, of general themes for subsequent writing topics.

Step 2. b.
The teacher is also creating questions in her mind for the later conversational component. She may also observe that some of class have feelings that are conducive to conversation. It is important to get the student's permission first before using any information.*

Step 3
The conversational part of the the class ensues and the teacher may pose the question(s) to the class as a whole, or to the student in pairs or small groups to discuss the question(s) for fifteen to twenty minutes. The teacher acts as a facilitator.

Step 4
The teacher collects the journal each night and passes it out again the next day. The process begins anew each day.

Step 5
The teacher, after the last day of class during the week, collects the journal and responds to it similarly to Step 2 (not 2.a. or 2.b.).

Step 6
On Monday the journal is returned to the student who then responds to the teacher's written questions and comments. On the second day of the second week the entire process begins again.

*The general themes and these other concerns are interchangeable. These same ideas can also be developed into writing topics.

Appendix I

The Questionnaire

The following is a slightly modified version of the questionnaire used in my class to measure student attitudes toward the dialogue journal.

Please do not write your name.

Questions	Almost Always	Often	Some-times	Never	Not sure
1. Is it helpful to write in your dialogue journal before you speak? Comments:					
2. Does your dialogue journal help you to think of ideas before you begin speaking? Comments:					
3. Does writing first in your dialogue journal help you to participate (take part) in conversation later in class? Comments:					
4. Do you think that what you write is related to what you talk about? Comments:					

Questions	Almost Always	Often	Some-times	Never	Not Sure
5. Are my questions and comments within the dialogue journal helpful to your writing? Comments:					
6. While you are writing, are my questions and comments to you orally (face-to-face) helpful to you? Comments:					
7. Is there enough correction of your writing mistakes? Comments:					
8. Is it difficult to understand my corrections of your writing? Comments:					

9. How much time do you think is spent on your dialogue journal?

Very Little | Not Enough | Enough | Too Much | Not Sure

Please circle one.

Comments:

10. If you have any other comments, please write them here.

Thank you!

Appendix J

Actual Tape-recorded Student Conversations

Below are examples of two students' conversations—one in which the dialogue journal was not utilized first and one in which this classroom tool was employed to stimulate conversation. The following material has been preserved in its original form. Usually, the ellipses indicate areas within the conversation that were too difficult to hear and subsequently transcribe, or they represent interruptions. In addition, the parentheses indicate additional explanation from the author, and the brackets denote significant language errors on the part of the student as well as non-verbal elements within the speech.

In order to initiate conversation without the dialogue journal, the following prompt was utilized: Albert, a student from Colombia, was attending a private university in New York. During the four years that he was there, he had not been able to develop any close friendships with Americans; consequently, he felt very frustrated.

The first student was Maria, a young mother with three children, from El Salvador.

T: How would you interpret this? Do you understand the word "interpret"?
S: Yes.
T: It's almost the same in Spanish. What do you think about that (the question)?
S: I think that if he, if he has, if he doesn't have any friends, how can he think that he will be invited to an American house?
T: Do you think it's unusual—oh, OK. Go ahead. I don't want to interrupt you. Go ahead.
S: Yeah. It's the only way we can be invited—if we have American friends. . . . I have never worked with an American family. Now that I have worked with them families, their families, other persons, I think maybe they can invite me or something like that. But if I haven't gone there, how can they invite me if they don't know me?
T: Uhmm. Well, do you think it's unusual because he had been at the university four years?
S: Oh.

T: Oh, excuse me (I didn't tell you.). This was supposed to be at the American university for four years and he was never invited.

S: So I think he had friends . . . Maybe he was, . . . he was, he wasn't friendly enough to make a friendship with Americans. [Pause].

T: OK. Well, thank you. Is that it? Is that all you want to say about it?

S: [Laughs] I don't know what to, what to say.

T: OK. That's fine. That's fine. OK.

The following is an example of this same student's speech with the dialogue journal having been utilized first; the topic concerns older relatives and whether they should be put in nursing homes or not. In addition, Maria discusses her own experience(s) since her own mother had lived with Maria's family in the past:

T: You see the people looking out the window. Where do you see this?

S: Well, every time I pass by. . . the nursing home. Uhm.

T: Like in Montrose or. . . ?

S: Oh, oh, no, in Los Angeles.

T: Really. You actually see their faces?

S: Yeah, they're on their wheelchair.

T: Uhm, Maria. I, uh, uhm.

S: They're in Los Angeles. There are many hospitals . . .

T: In downtown Los Angeles?

S: Near to the place I live.

T: Uhm, uhm . . . . So you're saying, you say, (in the dialogue journal) 'I see it the other way because it isn't my culture but if it were it would be nothing peculiar for me.' That's very interesting.

S: [Laughs] Yeah, because you're used to it.

T: So it's peculiar for me but it isn't . . .

S: For me.

T: It's peculiar for you.

S: Uh huh.

T: But not for me because I am used to it.

S: Uh huh.

T: And your way's peculiar to me because I am not used to it, but you are.

S: Aahh . . .

T: Remember when I was talking to you about, uhm, the people (older) and-and-and I said, 'Well, would your mother say this or would your mother interfere with this and you said, 'No, no she wouldn't. She would not say things like that.'

S: Uh huh, yeah.

T: I still can't believe that!

S: [Laughs]

T: [Laughs]. Do you know the word, "interfere"?

S: Yes, uh huh. It's almost the same in Spanish.

T: . . . So she respects your space and you respect hers?

S: Uh huhm.

T: I can't believe it. So she knows the boundaries?

S: Uh huhm. Yes. She, uh, if we say something—do you mean for the children or for us? If we have a problem? Do you—my mother—do you mean, uh, would she say something?

T: Yeah. That's a good example. Would she, would she say something?

S: Well, if she thinks that I am right, she will complain to my husband.

T: What does your husband think about that? Well, I mean what would, your husband is no longer living but what would he think of that? Would he think, 'Oh, woman be quiet!'?

S: [Laughs] No. He . . . never say that.

T: But did he . . .

S: He didn't like it. He didn't like it. But then they talk, they talk it over. But, well, sometimes they agree.

T: They do agree or disagree?

S: Agree. Sometimes. Not all the times.

T: What happens if they don't agree?

S: Uhm. Oh, yes . . . Argue, arguing.

T: They argue? Is that hard for everybody?

S: No, not that hard.

T: It's not that hard; you don't get . . . or you don't feel stressed out?

S: No.

T: Really?

S: It's just to say it's fine. Something what [sic] is wrong.

T: And that's it.

S: Uhm, yeah.

T: It seems so simple to me but I know it can't be that simple. But maybe it is that simple. I mean it's that, it seems like your world that you live in, El Salvador, is more, we say in English, "black and white." Is that true?

S: Uhm.

T: Here, it seems much more "gray" with all these . . . ?

S: "Black and white"--why?

T: Well, this is right, this is wrong. That's what black and white is.

S: Oh-oh, uh huh.

T: And like . . .

S: . . . problem was because he used to drink.

T: Your husband?

S: Uh huh. That was the only problem.

The second student was Vielka, a young married woman, from Panama. Her conversation, without the previous use of the dialogue journal, is as follows:

S: I think it's kind of hard because that never happened to me before. But . . .

T: Oh, this . . .

S: Yeah, the American people are always friendly to me.

T: Ah.

S: But let's see. Uhm, they [sic] sure cold if they didn't like-like to spend the night with him. It's hard. And . . .

T: But do you think it's kind of strange that he was here for four years and no one invited him?

S: I know; it's-it's really strange. But usually, uhm, the first year that you come here you get, start having friends and all this stuff. I don't know.

T: Uhm.

S: It's strange.

T: It's strange, OK. Well. But it does happen.

S: It does?

T: Yeah-yeah. Because, uhm the Adult Ed classes are more family-oriented. . . because you have a mother and (I mean) husband and wife in class or aunt and uncle. But usually in the university, you're . . . all . . .

S: All by yourself.

T: Yeah.

S: Do it yourself; nobody's gonna help you.

T: Exactly-exactly-exactly. So that's why I think . . .

S: Oh, do you think that they (other students at the university) like push you away so that they can keep going sometimes?

T: Ahhh . . . Maybe.

S: Really?

T: Yeah, yeah. I never thought about that like that, quite like that . . .

S: They push you in so that they can get over. . . . Uhm . . .

T: OK. If that's all you can think of, that's fine.

S: Oh, oh. Maybe because he wasn't that friendly.

T: Uhm.

S: Maybe his personality didn't help.

T: Some other students said that, too.

S: Oh, really?

T: Yeah-yeah.

S: Oh, I think so. Before I had some problems when I come [sic] and I still have some.

T: Oh, you do? Oh, you do? Oh, yeah. People . . .

S: People sometimes they like friends and then they like forget about me. You know why? Sometimes.

T: Is that only in North America?

S: Uhm, in Panama, too.

T: In Panama, too. Oh-oh. OK-OK?

S: Let's see what else. Uhm. Maybe you think it has something to do that he was going to the private university?

T: Uh, yeah. Maybe . . .

S: All I can think.

The following is Vielka's conversation with the dialogue journal. First, she and I are discussing the food that she <u>does</u> like in the United States. Then the topic changes to one of the ways she has changed since she has been here.

T: . . . You don't eat tortillas. So what kind of food do you like to eat here?

S: Uh, I like to eat like, uhm, Chinese chicken salad; it's my favorite and Thai food.

T: So that food's light.

S: Yeah.

T: It doesn't make you hungry again.

S: It doesn't make me hungry. But the hamburger or baked potato or something like that . . . it's like, it's like nothing to me. I don't know why. It's what I eat it.

Topic change

T: Uhm. OK. I am really confused. Uhm. I feel, I feel like you're contradicting—do you understand the word "contradict"? (At this point, the teacher is referring to the student's writing within the dialogue journal.)

S: Yeah.

T: I feel like you're contradicting yourself here. I don't understand.

S: Oh.

T: OK. Go ahead. Go ahead.

S: I feel like in Panama, when I did something more than for myself, it's because my grandmother or mother they used to tell me, 'Vielka, do this,'Vielka, do this,' every single morning so I had to do it, right? But here it's different. He (her husband) say [sic], 'Will you do this?', 'Can you do this?' and it's up to me if I, if I'm gonna do it.

T: Uhm. But, but you said right here (in the dialogue journal), 'Vielka, you must stay in the house because somebody comes see the car that's for sale' [sic]. So he (her husband) . . .

S: 'You must', 'you must', means like, uh . . .

T: 'I would like you to'? . . .

S: Uh, is what I tried to say. 'Could you' . . . . I got confused right there.

T: Oh.

S: Is like 'Could you stay here and show the car to the people that's coming here?'

T: Because it says (in the dialogue journal) if I were in Panama I probably . . . probably would say, 'No, I'm going to the beach.'

S: Yeah. That means that in Panama I, I almost all the time did everything I wanted to do. And leave the more important things at the last minute—to do it the last minute. But here I do for myself.

Appendix K

Tape-recorded Conversation Evaluation Form

The following is a modified form of the ACTFL Diagnostic Interview Report Form, Advanced Level (Liskin-Gasparro, 1987, pp. 167-169). In addition, indicated here are the characteristics evident within both verbal exchanges of the component of the class interviewed. The letter "M" represents Maria and the letter "V" denotes Vielka. The number 1 signifies verbal communication without the utilization of the dialogue journal beforehand; the number 2 represents the employment of the dialogue journal with conversation afterward.

Advanced level functions and topics

Indicate which Advanced level functions were treated in the interview:

V2	Narration in present time
V2	Narration in past time
	Narration in future time
M1, M2, V1, V2	Description in present time
M1, M2, V1, V2	Description in past time
	Description in future time
M1, M2, V1, V2	Make comparisons
	Give instructions

Indicate which topic areas were touched on in the interview:

V2	Interests and leisure activities
M2, V1, V2	Travel and vacation activities/experiences
M1	Jobs
	Future plans (study, employment, etc.)
M2, V1, V2	Other autobiographical information
M2	Current events (school, local, national, international events, discussed in a narrative or descriptive mode)

Did the student consistently do the following during the interview?

M1, M2, V1, V2	Participate as a full conversation partner
M1, V1, V2	Link sentences together in paragraphs
M1, M2, V1, V2	Add information that had not been specifically asked for, give examples
M1, M2, V1	Spontaneously engage the tester in conversation (ask tester questions, ask if tester agrees, etc.)

Features of the Superior level . . . :

Supported Opinion: (Examples from the tape-recorded conversations follow each type; some of the questions could fit in more than one category)

*Questions/topics posed by tester [teacher]:

Remember when I was talking to you about, uhm, people [older] and-and-and-and -and I said, 'Well, would your mother say this or would your mother interfere with this?' and you said, 'No, no, she wouldn't. She would not say something like that.' (In M2)

Do you know the word, "interfere"? (In M2)

*Questions used to follow up, offer an opposing point of view, etc. (extremely important for eliciting supported opinion):

I see it the other way because it isn't my culture but if it were it would be nothing peculiar for me. That's very interesting. (In M2)

I can't believe it. So she knows the boundaries? (In M2)

What does your husband think about that? Well, I mean what would [since] your husband is no longer living but what would he think of that? Would he think, 'Oh, woman be quiet!'? (In M2)

. . . I am really confused. . . . I feel, I feel like you're contradicting—do you understand the word "contradict"? (In V2)

. . . But you said right here [in the dialogue journal], 'Vielka, you must stay in the house because somebody comes see the car that's for sale' [sic]. So he [her husband] . . . (In V2)

Because it says [in the dialogue journal] if I were in Panama I probably . . . probably would say, 'No, I'm going to the beach.' (In V2)

*Questions used to elicit hypothesis, speculation: . . .

Do you think it's unusual—. . . (In M1)

Well, do you think it's unusual because he had been at the university four years? (In M1)

They argue? Is that hard for everybody? (In M2)

It seems so simple to me but I know it can't be that simple. But maybe it is that simple. I mean it's that, it seems like your world that you live in, El Salvador, is more, we say in English, "black and white." Is that true? (In M2)

But do you think it's kind of strange that he was here for four years and no one invited him? (In V1)

Is that only in North America? (In V1)

Appendix L

Potential Problems Associated with Teaching with the Dialogue Journal

The following questions deal with various concerns involving the utilization of the dialogue journal in the ESL classroom. I have determined that these concerns may not be all inclusive; however, I have presented those questions I believe are most significant to the ESL teacher. My answers reflect the perspective of an Adult Education Level V instructor.

1. What are some of the more difficult topics to respond to?

   Perhaps the hardest topics to comment on are the same subjects that are more intellectually difficult for students. These dialogue journal questions seem to involve a deeper level of critical thinking; language learners are not always accustomed to utilizing this skill in their new language. (It should be noted that all the dialogue journal topics draw upon critical thinking skills; however, these particular questions seem to contain ideas that exist universally in all cultures or possess more philosophical elements.)

   Therefore, students' writing is not consistently comprehensible. The teacher must constantly review in her mind exactly what students are attempting to convey. This fact seems to be true of students who have not completed high school in their own countries. Some of the educational systems, from which the Adult Education class is derived, do not emphasize the acquiring of critical thinking skills.

   Some examples of these more difficult topics include:

   1. The Equal Rights Amendment or (ERA) was a big issue in our country for women. Should men and women be treated equally? Why or why not?

   2. Where does discrimination come from? How does it begin?

   3. In the reading book, we've started to discuss "ethnocentrism." What are two things or two ways of doing things that you think are better or better done in your country?

2. Does the dialogue journal adversely affect a given curriculum where a certain amount of time is spent on conversation?

   In my classroom the dialogue journal did not do so because Level V within the Adult Education system allows for more flexibility than classes at lower levels. In addition, since it is the last class offered before the ESL credit classes, writing can and should be emphasized.

However, I have observed with the Adult Education Level IV class I am currently teaching (Fall 1990) that a definite grammar component exists. There is a separate textbook for this element of the class. Thus, the time spent writing in the dialogue journal is not consistently perceived by students to be effective for them, although writing commonly reinforces any grammatical points students are learning. Therefore, although I usually employ the dialogue journal process every day, I have had to reduce the writing element to two days a week instead of the original four. Level IV students still need writing instruction; that fact never changes.

3. What is it like to respond to ideas and not to language; in other words, to not use overt correction of students' writing?

   Here, I am primarily interested in the teacher's responses to students in writing—after the dialogue journals have been collected for the week. It may be difficult at first but the teacher should attempt to discipline her mind to look past students' errors and subsequently model the correction within her responses. In essence, the teacher "trains" herself through the first few dialogue journal exchanges; even so, she does offer correct forms and vocabulary during the facilitation component of the dialogue journal process.

   However, toward the end of the semester, students will ask for overt correction of their work. This process can be accomplished in two manners: (a) assign other written work that is conducive to overt correction such as dictations or various types of short composition work, or (b) allow students to discover their own mistakes and/or those of another classmate's, if the topic is not too personal. At this point, the instructor can briefly review the corrections already made. This will be invaluable for students and be more facilitative for the teacher, especially in terms of time.

Appendix M

Examples of the Dialogue Journal Response Process

The following entries, which are unedited, have been printed with the initial permission of the student. I have utilized "[sic]" where the student's writing is not clear. In addition, these examples indicate a typical week within the dialogue journal cycle.

The following student, Maria, is from San Salvador; she is a young widowed mother with three children. She hopes to bring them to the United States in the near future; she hasn't seen them in four years.

2-27-90
What would you like to be doing in two years?

In two years I will have gone to my country and brought my kids here. And I think I will work at the same place because they are now helping me to get my green card. That is the only reason I can't go away of that house. Anyway I don't mind being a babysitter because they pay me pretty good and they treat me very very nice.

They say they are going to help me when I bring my children over here. But I know that my way of life will change by then because I will have to take care of my kids too. I will go home everyday. maybe [sic] I could afford to buy a car. I will need it so much then to go to work and to go out on weekends. I can hardly wait to go there and see all my family and friends.

2-28-90
What is the importance of having or setting goals? Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

My important goal is to learn to speak English very well. But I disagree with this crazy idea because learning another lenguage [sic] is not a piece of cake. Everyday [sic] I get disappointed because I can't even pronounce the "th" sound. And when I talk I say words that I should not say and I notice right after I've already said them. People look at me with a weird look but they don't say anything because they know my problem.

That is the reaso [sic] I feel unconfortable [sic] my goal. I hope I will speak it in due course.

3-1-90
What do you hope for your children here in the United States?

Well, teacher my children aren't here yet. But when I bring them here in the United States. they [sic] will go to school [sic] I hope not to have any problem with them about everything as: drugs, alcohol, gangs .

My mother says that they behave themselves. But this is another country and I can't help worrying about it [sic].

The important thing that worries me is that they will have to be alone while I work. But I hope we will be successful.

Maria,

You are improving! You can now say the "th" sound, right? Sometimes learning a second language is a crazy idea. Some people have said that you almost have to become like a fool to learn a new language—you have to learn to laugh at yourself. That's why children learn more quickly than adults.

I remember feeling like my personality had changed in Guatemala because I couldn't express myself adequately. It was very frustrating; sometimes I felt imprisoned.

If you want, could you tell me more about your children? I like Central American children; I have had many good experiences with them.

3-12-90

OK, I'm glad you have asked me that [sic] I love to talk about them.

My older daughter is thirteen now and she has always been very skinny, but now my mother says she is gaining some weight at last. She is in seventh grade and she is a little quiet [sic] of lazy for the study my mom says. And I tell her to try as harder [sic] as she can, and she says that she needs someone to help her with homework, because my mother doesn't know how to read so she can't help her.

My second daughter is ten and she's doing fourth grade and the youngest is six [sic] he [sic] is in the first grade. He has many friends at school and he likes to talk in class [sic] When they write me letters he tells me that he loves me very much and he would like to see me again.